

FIFTY-TWO
STIRRING STORIES
FOR BOYS.

BY

G. A. HENTY, G. MANVILLE FENN, FRANK H. CONVERSE,
DAVID KER, J. L. HARBOUR, MANLEY H. PIKE,
COULSON KERNAHAN, H. HERVEY,
ALICE F. JACKSON,
AND OTHER WRITERS.

EDITED BY

ALFRED H. MILES

ILLUSTRATED.



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P R E F A C E

S TIRRING stories for stirring times, and fifty-two of them.

All life stirs, and a healthy boy is all life. The stirring story of the past inspires him; the stirring story of the present excites him; and the two combine to help him to write with a big, bold hand the stirring story of the future.

A hundred years ago the world was in the hands of young men. Pitt and Canning were young men. Napoleon and Wellington were young men. Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Scott were young men.

Walpole, an old man, deplored, towards its close, the death of the old leaders of the eighteenth century. He was too dull to see the possibilities of the century about to dawn.

And now the nineteenth century has run its round and again the destinies of the world are in young hands. The giants who have borne the heat and burden of the nineteenth century have one by one laid down their torches and passed out into the darkness—Ruskin, almost the last, if not the last, of them, in the last year of its eventful course.

What the twentieth century may contribute to the working out of social evolution will be determined by those who enter it with young hearts and light feet.

Therein lies its hope. Youth cannot stand still ; it must be stirring ; and be it but healthy youth, it must move forward.

Stirring stories for stirring times, then, and fifty-two of them, written, collected, and arranged in the hope of stirring the boy, who "is the father of the man," to true conceptions of life and duty, to noble ideals of hope and ambition, and to heroic courage of effort and endurance.

In preparing this volume the Editor has been indebted to friends old and new. His friends G. A. Henty and G. Manville Fenn, who have never been absent from these annual volumes for the twelve years of their issue, have both contributed stories to its pages, and his friends Coulson Kernahan and H. Hervey have added to the store. The Editor once more acknowledges his obligations to the proprietors of *The Youth's Companion* and *Harper's Young People* for stories taken from the pages of their vigorous and stirring serials.

A. H. M.

October 1st, 1900.

TABLE OF AUTHORS.

G. A. HENTY.
J. L. HARBOUR.
GEO. MANVILLE FENN.
FRANK H. CONVERSE.
H. HERVEY.
MANLEY H. PIKE.
ALICE F. JACKSON.
L. J. BATES.
HOWARD PYLE.
WILLIAM DRYSDALE.
COULSON KERNAHAN.
LIEUT. R. E. PEARY.
MYRON B. GIBSON.
OLIVER G. FOSDICK.
LIZZIE W. CHAMPNEY.
C. B. HOWARD.
J. F. COWAN.

DAVID KER.
GRACE SCHUYLER.
W. J. HENDERSON.
JAMES CARTER BEARD.
FRANK M. BICKNELL.
SARAH W. KELLOGG.
W. RICKARD.
WILLIAM O. STODDARD.
W. THOMSON.
RICHARD VANE.
W. M. GRAYDON.
MARTHA M. WILLIAMS.
FLORA H. LOUGHEAD.
CON DURA.
JOHN K. BANGS.
JAMES BUCKHAM.
CHARLES DICKENS.

AND OTHER WRITERS.

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HOME AND SCHOOL.



A SCHOOL COMEDY.

A TRUE STORY OF MY SCHOOL DAYS.

BY H. HERVEY.

THERE were only a few of us—parlour boarders, so to speak—living with the Rev. Frank Hunter, an old Cantab and Church of England clergyman at Bathwick Hill, Bath. It was not a school, but more of a private scholastic boarding-house, and we were day pupils at the various colleges in the city. My parents were in India; so also were those of a fellow four years my senior, named Albert Fredericks. He is the hero of this true story; and as the others do not “come in,” I will say nothing about them. Fredericks and I shared the top back bed-room; Mr. and Mrs. Hunter that immediately below us; while old Sarah the cook occupied the front room on our landing.

A word descriptive of Albert Fredericks. He was sixteen years of age, somewhat thick-set, and did not promise to be tall. Without being what is termed a “pretty boy,” he was decidedly good-looking, with the most speaking blue eyes, into which he could throw a wonderful amount of expression. But it was his marvellous persuasive eloquence, his polished, courtly manner, and his matchless command of his mother tongue which were his strong points. He was never aggressively argumentative; he did not lay down the law, backing his

opinions and ideas with bombastic rodomontade, the usual characteristics of those who are inordinately "gifted with the gab"; his speech on all occasions was mellifluous to a degree; and a firm belief existed that in a bout of words between Fredericks and Holofernes himself the former, by virtue of his *suaviter in modo*, would come off the victor. Frequently had Mr. Hunter himself been vanquished by Albert's rhetorical fluency, forgiving and passing over many of the lad's peccadilloes as a consequence. But there were occasions, though very rare, when the spirit of the moral guardian would assert itself, and then Mr. Hunter would prove stern and unyielding, an instance of which I am about to narrate.

We had not been long at Bathwick House before Fredericks began to evince a considerable tendency to "side"—not objectionable "side," for the sweetness of his disposition had the effect of disarming resentment and causing one to look with indulgence on what, if coming from another, would not have been tolerated. Precocious beyond his years, courted and petted by all he came in contact with, his innate *savoir faire* enabling him to attain to things far beyond the reach of the average schoolboy, he had got into a "fast set" of people older than himself, and was 'more at home "doing" Milsom Street of an afternoon than in the playground or playing-fields of his college. Often did I and my chums, passing up the above-named fashionable thoroughfare on the way to some stamp-shop, rabbitry, or "tuck" place, come across Fredericks arrayed in a tall hat, lavender kid gloves, patent leather boots, and otherwise dressed to perfection, in the company of grown ladies and gentlemen—the gayest of them all, and the cynosure of the whole party, the gentler portion thereof especially; and as we stared open-mouthed at him he would pass on without even bestowing so much as a nod, far less a token of friendly recognition, such as usually obtains among schoolfellows. He was always being invited out. He possessed what few lads of his age could boast of, or, indeed, thought of—to wit, a dress suit, dress shirts, white ties, dancing-pumps, etc; and Mr. Hunter was

often much exercised on the subject of allowing Fredericks the liberty necessary to meet his numerous engagements; this, mind you, over and above the freedom we, as parlour boarders, commanded. Frequently when we, in our everyday "tog," were busy in the dining-room at our "preparation," he would appear in full evening costume, sit at his books for a short time, and then away he would go to some festivity, while we retired grumbling to bed.

So passed summer and autumn, peacefully and happily. We were an orderly lot; Mr. and Mrs. Hunter were very kind to us in all respects, and we had nothing to complain of.

Shortly before Christmas Fredericks got into "hot water"—real "hot water" this time. He, like myself, was destined for Sandhurst, but, being much more advanced, it had been arranged that he should attend for two hours nightly, from seven to nine, at the Rev. Mr. Dupuis', one of our college masters, for the purpose of extra study. Mr. Dupuis lived near the Sydney College; and all went well till one day the master complained to Mr. Hunter of Fredericks' irregular attendance. Naturally there was a row. Fredericks "owned up" to gallivanting instead of spending the time at Mr. Dupuis'. Mr. Hunter was very angry, and it required all the delinquent's "blarney" to qualify that reverend gentleman's wrath. However, it ended in his ruling that Fredericks should be deprived of all after-hours liberty for a whole month—a truly lenient sentence, but too severe a one for the culprit's tastes.

About a week later Fredericks knocked at Mr. Hunter's study door and asked leave to attend a subscription ball at the Assembly Rooms that night, and for which one of his numerous lady friends had sent him a ticket. As may be expected, his request was refused, and the applicant retired crestfallen, his warmest sympathiser being Mrs. Hunter, who, like all those of her sex coming in contact with him, was not proof against the lad's indescribable powers of fascination.

"I'm so sorry for you, Albert," she feelingly remarked as we assembled for tea and awaited Mr. Hunter's appearance;

"but the subscription dances will go on through the winter, and a week of your month has already passed ; so don't be downhearted."

Mrs. Hunter on this occasion presided at the tea-table dressed for going out. She vouchsafed us the information that she intended visiting her mother and sisters, who lived in Gay Street.

We went to bed at the usual hour, and I was soon asleep, to be roused by some one gently shaking me by the arm. I opened my eyes and found Fredericks bending over me.

"Hush !" he whispered, "don't make a row ; I'm going to the ball, Harry !"

"Humbug ! Over the left, you mean !" I replied, sitting up and regarding him owlshly and incredulously.

"Honour bright ! and I want you, like a good little chap, not to peach. I'll bring you some good things from the buffet."

"Nonsense, Albert ! Hunter has refused. What do you mean ?"

"Simply that I'm going in spite of him. I must go, if only to excuse myself. Will you help me by not sneaking ?"

"Of course ! But how will you manage it ?"

"Well, in the first place, look there ;" and he pointed to his bed.

I looked, and saw what seemed to be himself lying on his side with his face to the wall. Fredericks that evening had had the foresight to appear at tea with his face bound up in a silk kerchief, alleging that he had a toothache ; and here was the identical kerchief enveloping what now did duty for his head—the whole contrivance, position of body and all, as natural as possible !

"What's that for ?" I asked, mystified.

"You are always asleep when old Hunter comes. He sits up in his study every night till nearly twelve, and looks in at all the rooms before he goes to bed. That's to make him think I'm snug in mine !"

"I see. What time is it now ?"

"Just nine: dancing commences at half past. It will take me a good twenty minutes to reach the Assembly Rooms, so I've no time to lose."

"But, man! you have to dress."

"I've already done so," he whispered, opening his dressing-gown—another un-schoolboy-like luxury of his—and revealing himself in full evening attire. He stood in his stockings and carried his dancing-pumps under his arm.

"But how are you going to get out, Albert? Some of the stairs creak like fun. Unbolting and unchaining the front door will make an awful row; and you can't use the back door."

"I shall tread gently. I'm not going by the front door, but through the dining-room window."

"Good gracious! the dining-room is next to the study; and even if Hunter does not hear you, how will you get over the area and its railings?"

"I shall jump from the window-sill on to the rails, and then to the pavement. I have been practising it to-day when the coast was clear."

"Yes, before dark, perhaps; but now at night, with snow on the ground, you'll be breaking your neck!"

"No fear!" replied Fredericks reassuringly. "But I must be off. Mind, don't peach. I'll be back before any one is up; and don't you be yelling out when I come in."

I faithfully promised compliance. He substituted an overcoat for the dressing-gown, put on his cap, and stole from the room. Bitterly cold as it was, I crept out of bed, went on to the landing, and by the light of the hall lamp, which burnt all night, I watched his progress with bated breath and a sickening sensation of apprehension. Cautiously he descended the stairs, treading close along the wall, without causing the slightest creak. I crept down one flight, and saw him pass the dreaded study, stealing along on the tips of his stockinged feet; then he noiselessly opened the dining-room door, passed in, and as noiselessly closed it after him. Anxious to see how he would negotiate the railed area, I scuttled up the stairs and silently opened old Sarah's door.

"It is only I, Sarah," I whispered to the astonished old cook, who was reading in bed and fortunately made no outcry. "Forgive my coming in," I added, hastening to the window, pulling up the blind, and gently lifting the sash. "I'll tell you all about it presently."

Gooa old Sarah ! she made no demur—she never did under any circumstances.

I looked down. The window corresponded to that of the dining room, but with two floors intervening. I had not long to wait. Snow covered the ground ; it was a frosty, clear night, and I easily made out Fredericks' figure standing on the window-sill outside. I saw him spring : for a second of time he rested on the rail ; the next he had leapt to the pavement, and then I saw him scuttle across the grass plot in front of the three houses composing the terrace, and, passing through the gates opening into the main road, he vanished from my sight.

Sarah had ever proved to be true as steel to us, so I had no hesitation in letting her into the secret, and she promised to be down betimes in the morning to see if the truant had left any tell-tale traces of his escapade, and, if so, to remove them.

I returned to my bed. I could not sleep ; I trembled lest Fredericks, though successful in getting out, ~~should~~ be caught when coming in. In due course I heard a ~~door~~ open. The sound of boots upon the stairs with opening and closing of more doors warned me that Mr. Hunter was on his final round. I feigned sleep, but lay on my side commanding a view of the door and the "dummy" Fredericks in his bed. Mr. Hunter entered, candle in hand, and after casting a general look round he retreated. I heard him descending the stairs, and then his door closed. There was nothing to do now but await the "night larker's" return. I tried to keep awake ; but Nature would take no denial, and I fell asleep.

"Harry ! Harry !" and I again awoke to find Fredericks once more bending over me, with a lighted coloured taper in one hand, while with the other he proceeded to disgorge

from his coat-tail pockets such dainties as figs, prunes, sugared almonds, sweets containing liqueur, crackers, biscuits, and so forth.

"How did you get on?" I whispered, commencing to operate upon the spoil.

"Swimmingly! I enjoyed myself awfully. How have things been here?" he asked anxiously.

"All right. But oh, Albert, I watched you get out and cut off! I trembled when I saw you jumping the area rails."

"How did you see me?"

"Through Sarah's window. You know she's safe. Did you get in as easily?"

"Yes."

"Did you fasten the window before leaving the dining-room?"

"Yes. I'm afraid though, unless it comes down before light, old Hunter may notice my footprints in the snow outside the rails."

• "Don't fear; Sarah has promised to be down early to see that you have left no traces. And you really enjoyed yourself?"

"Yes, awfully. But who do you think were there?"

"Who?"

"Mrs. Hunter, with her two sisters, Fanny and Mary Chester!"

"No! What *did* you do?"

"The best I could. I walked straight up to them and asked to be allowed to put their names down for dances."

"You mean to say you had the cheek to do that? Well, what happened?"

"Oh, nothing. I danced several times with all three, got them partners, took Mrs. Hunter down to supper, and saw them all safe to Gay Street. They promised to say nothing to old Hunter about it."

"Should think not, indeed, after all your devotion. But, Albert, it is sure to leak out somehow or another."

"Let it," he answered lightly. "Hunter can't kill me;

the most he will do is to give me a caning. It is nearly half-past four; I'm going to turn in. Good-night, little 'un."

Breakfast passed off as usual, except that Mrs. Hunter was absent, she not having yet returned from Gay Street. That evening Albert and I walked home together, and just as we reached the house a cab drove up with Mrs. Hunter. Mr. Hunter opened the door, and I noticed with considerable misgiving, as the light of the hall lamp fell on his face, that he looked very black. Motioning his wife into the study, he bade us follow him there. Shutting the door, he took up the *Herald*, and, turning to an account of the previous night's ball, which contained a list of people who had been present, he said,—

"I see your name in this list, Fredericks. Can you explain how it got in?"

"Yes, sir; I was there."

"You were there, sir!" echoed Mr. Hunter in a terrible voice.

"Yes, sir. I went, in the first instance, for the purpose of excusing myself; but on finding Mrs. Hunter and her sisters there unattended, I had no alternative but to remain."

Mr. Hunter was speechless at the cool effrontery of the boy, and turned to his wife for an explanation.

"We met Albert at the ball, as he says," she explained, "and, seeing him, did not doubt but that you had ultimately given him permission to attend, and so gladly accepted his escort. I must say," she added, "that he contributed very largely to our enjoyment."

Mr. Hunter was nonplussed, and, not feeling equal to dealing with the matter at the moment, ordered Albert to his room and discussed matters in no amiable mood with his lady.

I, as the sharer of Albert's room, was the only boy in the house who knew anything of the adventure, and Mr. Hunter did not know that even I was in the secret. He concluded, therefore, that, as it was Albert's last term at Bathwick House, he would accept the suave and ample apology he wrote him

from his own room and trust his implicit promise not to disobey orders again rather than make public the disregard of his authority, which could hardly help but suffer unless followed by expulsion.

Whether it was that Albert felt that he had gone a little bit too far and was desirous of making some amends, or whether he became suddenly impressed with the necessity of applying himself to his studies, I do not know, but certain it is that he did apply himself with unremitting zeal until the end of the term, when he passed his preliminary for Sandhurst with credit to himself and his teachers.

A SCHOOL TRAGEDY.

BY H. HERVLY.

AMONG the few new fellows who joined us at Market Square College one term were two brothers named Davies—Fred, the elder, aged fourteen, and David, the younger, who was two years his junior.

Having ascertained that they hailed from somewhere under the shadow of Snowdon, Stevenson, a monitor, compelled them to speak to each other in Welsh—a performance which tickled us immensely—and the brothers Davies were promptly nicknamed Taffy primus and Taffy secundus.

Of course, they were asked if they ever thieved ; if we might at any time expect a visit from them with burglarious designs on stray legs of beef. We further expressed the conviction that if we ventured on a return visit we should not find them at home ; that this would of a surety be followed by a second predatory visit from them, during which they would purloin certain marrow-bones, in which case we should retaliate by giving them another call, and, on finding them in bed, wipe out old scores by laying those marrow-bones about their heads !

For the rest they were nice boys enough—answered to their sobriquets without demur, spoke English on all occasions, and entered readily into anything that was going on, so long as it did not entail violent exertion. On their first coming amongst us our reverend Principal had accompanied them into the playground, and, calling some of the bigger fellows to him, told them to let it be generally understood that the brothers Davies laboured under certain physical disadvantages which would preclude them from joining in the rougher order of sports, and that he, the Principal, was confident we would

take the hint and treat the newcomers accordingly. Fortunately for the brothers, we of the college were singularly free from the ruder element of the genus schoolboy. Bullying pure and simple was almost unknown. True, the "cock" of the school and some dozen of the bigger first-form fellows exacted the implicit obedience and subservience of the rest; but these demands were always enforced in so unobjectionable a manner that complaint or mutiny were well-nigh impossible, and we pulled together as happily as could be.

The brothers Davies had not been long with us before it was evident that David, the younger, was the better "man" of the two. Not only did David take his place in the form next above his elder brother, but when the latter was indoors—as was often the case—the younger lad would join heart and soul in rounders and other games common to playgrounds between the going out of cricket and the coming in of football.

"What's wrong with your brother, Taffy secundus?" asked Broome, the "cock," one afternoon when he noticed David Davies to have been one of the leading spirits in a game of rounders.

"He is delicate, I believe, and cannot stand much exertion."

"You believe! Is that all you know about him, younker?"

"Yes; this is the first time we have been to school together. He left home five years ago for a school in Westmoreland, so I don't know much about him."

"What made him leave the school in Westmoreland?"

"I don't know. My father, before placing us here, told me that Fred was not strong, and that I should have to look after him and take care of him."

"And you never saw your brother during the five years?"

"No. He was a permanent boarder, and away from home the whole time."

"What is the name of his school?"

"I don't know."

"Rum!" remarked Broome to Stevenson primus, as they walked away arm in arm. "There's some mystery at the bottom of this, don't you think, Steve?"

"I do ; but I suppose 'twill elucidate itself in time."

Though near to a large city in the West of England, the college house stood quite out in the country. To the right and left of the main building extended two wings, comprising the dormitories ; the playground proper lay to the back—a large, palisaded semi-circle ; while further still to the rear was the playing-field, including our cricket and football grounds. In a corner of this field was a large pond, into which fell and out of which ran a brook of clear water. This pond was some twelve feet deep in the centre, and constituted our bathing-place in summer and our skating—"ground" in winter. A door in the palisades opened into this field. It was generally kept locked, the key being suspended on a board hung up in the main hall.

One morning about a month after we had re-assembled, Mr. Single, the senior resident usher, was considerably surprised to hear a knock at his door. The first bell—the "rouser," as we called it—had just clanged, and Mr. Single was on the point of getting out of bed. In answer to his "Come in" the younger Davies entered, looking scared and terrified.

"Halloa ! 'Taffy secundus, what's the matter with you ?" asked Mr. Single.

"Please, sir, I have come to you about my brother."

"Well, what about him ?" queried the usher, proceeding to adjust his braces.

"He's all wet, sir."

"All what ?" exclaimed Mr. Single, staring at the lad.

"All wet, sir. Just now, when the bell awoke me, I found my brother all damp, and his hair matted as if—as if——"

"As if what ?"

"As if he had been putting his head in a bucket, sir," continued David, whimpering.

"Tut, tut ! Nonsense !" cried Mr. Single incredulously. "However, wait a minute ; I'll come with you and see."

"Please, sir, be careful. You know, I suppose, that my brother is not strong ; and from what my father said to me before he placed us here, I think—I think——"

"Yes, yes, my boy, I'll be careful. The Principal told me all about it. Don't be afraid. Come along; I'll have a look at him."

Followed by the boy, Mr. Single proceeded to the dormitory where the brothers Davies slept—a dormitory presided over by Broome and Stevenson primus. The boys had finished dressing and were trooping down to the big schoolroom for prayers, Davies primus among them. Mr. Single regarded him keenly as he passed, but did not speak to him, intending first to examine the room. Yes, David had spoken the truth. Not only were the sheets and pillows of the boy's bed wet, but his night-shirt was found to be in the same state.

"Can you account for this at all?" he asked, turning to David, who stood by him.

"No, sir."

"Hum. Very curious," muttered Mr. Single, cogitating deeply. "However," he added aloud, "we must inform the Principal of this. Come to me after prayers. Don't say a word about it to your brother, mind."

Half an hour later Mr. Single and David Davies were closeted with the Principal in his room—that awful room of which all of us entertained the direst dread and some had had the direst experience! After the usher had made his report, the Principal naturally turned to the boy.

"Can you throw no light on this, Davies?" he asked. "I know you have not seen much of each other for some years; but has your brother never told you anything about himself? Have your parents not told you anything about any peculiarity of his?"

"Only that he is delicate, sir, and that I should do my best to look after him and keep him out of harm's way."

"Have you remarked nothing yourself since you have been here?"

"Only that he is often dull, sir, and he mutters to himself a good deal. My father told me that, should I ever notice anything uncommon about my brother, I was to tell my master; and I have done so, sir."

"Yes, I know you have ; and quite right, too. Look here, Davies," continued the Principal, after he had written a short note, ' take this over to Dr. Harris at once. He lives in the first house you will come to on the right in the City Road. You will find him at home at this hour. Come back with him in his carriage, as he may want to ask you some questions. Do you understand? "

"Yes, sir."

David sped on his errand, and shortly returned with the doctor. The Principal, bringing Mr. Single, came from the schoolroom, and Dr. Harris was furnished with all the information we are already in possession of. He listened attentively, and then took the Principal aside and spoke to him for a few minutes, after which David was instructed to precede the doctor into the elder brother's classroom, and make pretence of asking him for a book—this to point him out to the medical man without arousing suspicion. Dr. Harris, as professional attendant of the college, was in the habit of paying promiscuous visits to the institution, so that his appearance on this occasion would, generally speaking, be nothing out of the way. All went well. The doctor, thanks to David, spotted Fred Davies right enough, and in an apparently off-hand sort of way was enabled to hold a short conversation with him, but during which he diagnosed the case sufficiently to make up his mind as to what was really the matter.

"I see what it is," remarked Dr. Harris on rejoining the Principal. "There's nothing very wrong with the lad; but he is a somnambulist."

"A somnambulist !"

"Yes ; he walks in his sleep, and drenches himself in the act ; but how remains to be found out. He must be watched ; and as soon as we know what he does, and how he gets himself wet, we must take steps to check the habit. Put a watch over him—an unremitting watch, for he may walk to-night, or he may not do so for weeks to come. You say this is the first occasion of his being found wet since he has

been with you—over a month, isn't it? Well, as I have already said, he may repeat the performance to-night, or he may be quiescent for any time. The watch, however, must be put on at once."

"May the younger brother be told?"

"Can you depend on his discretion?"

"Yes."

"Very well, then—tell him; also a few of the senior boys of his room on whom you can rely. Mr. Single, too, had better shift in to the dormitory. Let the watchers take turn about to keep awake, he on watch arousing the rest as soon as Davies gets up. Above all things, the boy himself must not know that he is under surveillance; and care must be taken not to interfere with him during his walk, for the consequences of so doing may be serious. Let me know as soon as anything has been discovered."

The arrangements were soon made. Mr. Single, on the plea that something required doing to his room, had his bed brought in to the dormitory. Broome, Stevenson, and two other fellows named Charliewood and Trafford were inducted by the Principal into the secret, while David Davies was strictly enjoined to make no sign. All were true to their trust. Beyond these six, no one in that room had the least suspicion that anything out of the common was happening; no one knew that through the livelong night one pair of eyes at least kept watch over the bed occupied by 'Taffy primus. However, that night passed, and the next, and the next. Those in the "swim" were beginning to question the validity of the doctor's opinion, while those not in the "swim" marvelled at the length of time taken to rectify whatever was wrong with Mr. Single's room, wishing him back there, for his presence among them had a deterrent effect on the enjoyment of such bedroom sports as we had been accustomed to.

But during the night, the fourth from that on which the watch was set, the *éclaircissement* took place. There was a full moon; the air was warm and balmy; the clock in the turret had struck two, and Broome had just crept stealthily across

to Mr. Single's bed to arouse him to take his turn. While the two were conversing in whispers they were startled by the sound of some one muttering. It proceeded from Fred Davies' bed. Both silently gazed at it. They noticed that while David in the next bed slumbered peacefully his brother tossed restlessly from side to side, continuing his muttering. Anon the boy sat up and frequently passed his hand over his brow.

"He's going to walk," whispered Mr. Single to Broome. "Go and awake the rest."

The "cock" obeyed, creeping from one bed to another and arousing the four other sleepers.

By this time Fred Davies was on his feet, the others gazing fearfully at him. He now glided rather than walked down the passage between the beds towards the door; the others, headed by Mr. Single, followed at a safe distance in his wake. The door was closed, but not locked. The walker opened it unhesitatingly, and proceeded at a rapid pace along the passage, flitting in and out of the patches of moonlight shining through the numerous side windows, with the others a few steps behind him. He now descended the stairs, the party following. There was no noise; they were all bare-footed, and presented the appearance of so many "spectres pale" with their long white night-shirts in the ghostly moonlight. Arrived in the hall, the somnambulist seemed for a moment at fault; but he soon recovered himself. Passing his hand over his forehead, he went up to the key-board, took therefrom two keys, and made across the hall for the door leading into the playground.

"He's going out, sir," whispered Broome to Mr. Single. "Can't we stop him?"

"No," replied the usher in equally low tones. "He's not to be interfered with on any account."

David Davies, trembling with awe and astonishment, clung to Mr. Single, while the others huddled together close behind him. The walker unlocked and opened the door and passed out into the playground; the others streamed out after him. What on earth was he going to do out here? There was no water here for him to damp himself with.

"Sir," whispered poor little David, convulsively pressing Mr. Single's hand, "where is he going?"

"Keep quiet and be brave, my boy. We can't do anything. The doctor says he must *not* be interrupted."

They were not kept long in suspense. Arriving at the door in the palisade, the walker unlocked and opened it, passing out into the playing-field beyond; the others followed, and, with something akin to horror, they saw him turn to the right and make straight for the pond.

"Good God!" involuntarily ejaculated Mr. Single. "Can your brother swim, David?" he asked of the lad.

"Yes, sir—so he has told me."

The walker halted on the margin of the pond; the others halted too and looked fearfully on. After again passing his hand across his forehead, Fred Davies divested himself of his night-shirt, and, amid a smothered exclamation of terror from the onlookers, plunged into the water.

The watchers now rushed to the bank and gazed spellbound at the boy, who was calmly swimming about with an air of perfect enjoyment. It seemed impossible this was a sleep-walker; and, impelled doubtless by this idea, Mr. Single shouted to him, "Davies, what are you doing in the water at this time of night? Come out at once!"

Whether the words reached the ears and understanding to which they were addressed will never be known; but no sooner were they uttered than the swimmer paused in his natation, and, as a natural consequence, seemed to sink lower in the water.

With a wild cry of agony, "He's sinking! He's sinking!" David Davies flung himself headlong into the pond and struck out madly for his brother, who was in the centre.

"Come back, David!" shouted Mr. Single. "Don't touch him if you value his life!"

Too late! Before the words had well left the usher's lips the boy had reached his elder brother and thrown a supporting arm round him.

"Fred!" he screamed, "'tis I—David—come to save you! You were sinking! Strike out; I will support you!"

The spectators on the bank, paralysed out of all action, looked on with bated breath. They saw the elder boy's face turned for a moment on his brother; then they heard him utter a piercing scream; and then they saw him throw up his arms and sink from their sight with his brother clinging to him. Though all there could swim, not one could dive. Who ever dreamt of such a terrible possibility as this? Who for one moment thought that the services of divers would be required to rescue two of their fellows from the pond at midnight? While some plunged in in the vain hope of rendering aid should they rise, others tore back to the college house to raise the alarm. In an incredibly short time the circumference of the pond was fringed with an eager, horrified crowd, while the best divers among them threw themselves into the water. At last they brought them to the surface and to land. They were locked in each other's arms, but—quite dead. The usual means were resorted to to restore animation, supplemented by the skilled ministrations of Dr. Harris, who arrived shortly after. But alas! no; they were beyond all hope of resuscitation. They were dead.

We afterwards learned that Fred Davies had developed the habit of somnambulism at an early age, and that he had been placed at the Westmoreland school, away from the associations of his childhood, and under the care of a medical man who made such cases his speciality and the subject of special treatment; that, after remaining in the North of England for five years, he had returned to his home as quite cured of his weakness, but which again manifested itself in him with the disastrous result as above recorded. Had the poor little brother been prevented from interfering with him, the probabilities are that nothing so untoward would have occurred.

For the remainder of that term we chiefly employed ourselves in razing level with the ground sundry hillocks and mounds that existed in the playing-fields, and with the earth thus gained we filled in that fatal pond in such a manner that the place should know it no more.

BILLY AND I.

BY J. L. HARBOUR.

I HAVE always liked the nickname of Billy. Your experience may have been different from mine, but I have never known a boy named Billy who was not a frank, jolly fellow whom everybody liked.

I know that everybody liked Billy Waterman. He is the Billy I am going to tell you about. The Watermans lived in the same block in which I lived in a small Western town called Tuscaloosa. There was nothing but a narrow alley between my father's back yard and the back yard of the Waterman house, so Billy and I had only to scale a back fence or two when we wanted to meet. There was a gate in either back fence, but we were not the kind of boys who enter in at gates when there are fences to be climbed.

My bedroom was in the rear of our house and Billy's was in the rear of the Waterman house, and as the houses were not more than two hundred feet apart, we could, by yelling a little, carry on very agreeable conversations through open windows when we were in our own rooms. Of course everybody in the block could hear what we had to say; but, like most boys of thirteen or fourteen, we had few secrets, and were willing to take the entire block into our confidence. So we did a great deal of screeching back and forth in a very hearty and boyish way. But in the winter-time we were denied this pleasure, for our mothers objected to our having the windows open so much.

Mr. Waterman was the wealthiest man in Tuscaloosa, and he had about the finest house, but that did not make a bit

of difference to Billy when it came to associating with other boys. My father was a poor man, but Billy was the warmest friend I ever had. We were so nearly inseparable for a long time that our mothers called us the Siamese twins.

One day in October Billy came vaulting airily over the two fences between his back yard and ours. I was out in our yard raking up a lot of dead leaves. I could see that Billy was excited.

"Say, Joe," he said, "I've just thought of something ever so jolly."

"What?" I asked, bluntly.

"S'posing we put up a telegraph line?"

"A telegraph line?"

"That's what I said."

"Where would you put it up?"

"Oh, only from your room to mine."

"That would be a great telegraph line, now, wouldn't it, boy?"

I was two days older than Billy, and I sometimes assumed an air of condescension on that account. But Billy was too good-natured to mind it much, and he said:

"Oh, we couldn't do any great amount of actual business over it, nor supply the *Tuscaloosa Times* with press reports, but we could have a good deal of sport out of it; now don't you think so?"

"Maybe we could," I said, more encouragingly. "But how could we manage it?"

"Easy enough. You've got that set of telegraphic instruments your brother George used when he was studying telegraphy with the operator down in the depot last year, and I could coax father to give me a set for my birthday, which comes next week—you see?"

"But how about the poles and wires?"

"There's a big coil of wire down in my father's warehouse that was left over when they put up the telegraph line between here and Eddyville, and there's a box of those green glass thingumbobs that you wrap the wire around on the post;

father would give me some of them and the little wire we would want, for he likes to have me interested in useful things."

"We'd need some poles," I said.

"Of course we should. I never for a moment supposed that the wires could lie flat on the ground, and I've planned the whole thing out, poles and all. We shouldn't need but two poles, and there's three or four lying down by the railroad track that they threw away because they were imperfect when the Eddyville line was built. No one would say a word if we used a couple of those poles. Don't you think that it is a great scheme?"

I had really thought so all along, and now I said so openly and heartily.

"We can have a lot of fun out of it, Billy," I said.

"Course we can, Joe. I'll ask father about my instruments when he comes home to dinner, and your brother George would let you use his, wouldn't he?"

My brother George, who was fifteen years older than I, had become a very expert telegraph operator, and had charge of the most important office on a well-known line of railroad.

He had just at that time come home to be married, and was in such a happy frame of mind that it was perfectly safe to ask him for anything, so when I mentioned the matter of our proposed telegraph line to him he said:

"Of course you can have those old instruments of mine, Joey, and, what's more, I'll help you and Billy to put up your line and connect the instruments with the wire, and all that."

I ran off to tell Billy, and he informed me that his father had agreed to buy the instruments Billy wanted, and had said that Thomas, the Waterman's hired man, might help us putting up poles, and stretching the wire.

With the help of Thomas and my brother George the line was put up and in good working condition in one afternoon.

Brother George had already taught me a good deal about telegraphy, and he gave Billy and me a number of lessons before he went away, and it was not very long before we could

send messages over the wire by clicking off the letters of each word very slowly.

Having the two offices so near was quite an advantage, because when there were breaks in any of our messages we could throw up our windows, and supply the missing words by yelling them across our back lots to each other. In fact, it was understood between us that five slow and distinct clicks of the instrument meant, "Open window," and at first our messages consisted chiefly of five clicks.

We were so well pleased with our telegraph line, and so much interested in sending messages, that we learned quite rapidly, and it was not long before we could talk freely with each other over the wires.

Our "private wire," as we called it, was the envy of a good many boys in Tuscaloosa, and we often allowed them the privilege of trying to send messages over it.

One Saturday afternoon Mr. and Mrs. Waterman went to Eddyville to remain until Monday with Billy's grandmother Waterman, who lived in that town. Billy informed me of the proposed visit by sending the following message over the wire before I was fairly out of bed on Saturday morning :

"Father and mother are going to Eddyville to stay over Sunday. You come and stay all night with me."

Billy and I often spent nights with each other, and that morning Mrs. Waterman asked me to stay with Billy the two nights she would be away.

Of course Billy and I always had a merry time on such occasions, and on this particular Saturday night we were merrier than usual. We were entirely alone, and it was the first time we had ever remained alone in the house all night. The Watermans' hired man, whose room was in the barn, usually slept in the house when Mr. and Mrs. Waterman were away, but on this occasion he had been given permission to go and spend Saturday night and Sunday with his parents, who lived in a little town five miles from Tuscaloosa. Jane, the one house-servant, received word late Saturday evening that her sister had died suddenly at her home on a little farm two

miles from town, and Jane had returned with the messenger who had brought the sorrowful news of her sister's death. It was then arranged that Billy should eat his meals at our house during the absence of his parents.

Just before dark we went around and locked up the house, without paying particular attention to every fastening, because such a thing as a burglary had never been heard of in Tuscaloosa, and many families never locked their doors at all, nor did they have fastenings of any kind on their windows.

Billy and I never thought anything at all about burglars as we climbed the stairs to Billy's room.

We laughed and talked, and played checkers, and looked at some new books Billy had, until about nine o'clock. Then we concluded that we were hungry, and we went down to the pantry, where we got a pie, which we took back to Billy's room and ate. Then we went to bed ; but we didn't go to sleep at once. The pie probably made us wakeful.

Billy went to sleep first, and I dozed along until I heard a clock downstairs strike eleven, when I took a little nap myself. An hour or two later the pie, or something else, awakened me. I felt restless and uncomfortable, and I tossed about on my pillow until I heard the clock strike two. I was lying very still then, when I heard a sound as of some one blundering against a chair downstairs, and I sat up in bed and listened. A little later I distinctly heard a creaking sound on the back stairs.

Billy and I had come up those back stairs on our way from the pantry, and Billy had spoken about how they creaked. They were creaking in that same way now. At that moment Billy turned over toward me, and touching me lightly, said in a whisper :

"You awake, Joey?"

"Sh-sh-sh!" I whispered. And then I put my lips to his ear and whispered, "I believe that some one is in the house."

Billy sat up beside me then, and we sat there in silence, with clasped hands. The creaking continued, and I whispered :

"Doesn't that sound like some one on those stairs?"

"It *is* some one," replied Billy positively.

The next moment we distinctly heard the knob on the door of our room turn. We had happened to bolt the door that evening, although we did not always do so when I stayed with Billy.

I noticed that Billy's hand did not tremble in the least as it clasped mine, and presently he whispered:

"I'm going to peep through the key-hole."

He slipped noiselessly out of bed, and I followed him. The door was fastened with a bolt, and there was no key in the door. We stole softly over to the door, and Billy found the key-hole and peeped through it. Then he whispered, with his lips to my ear:

"There's a man out there in the hall. He's got a dark lantern, or something of that kind, for he turned it this way just as I peeped, and I saw him."

I put my eye to the key-hole, but the man had disappeared.

"He's gone into father's room, likely," whispered Billy, "and there's things in there father wouldn't lose for a good deal; and mother has a lot of jewellery and ever so many solid silver things locked up in the lower drawer of her dressing-case. Some of the silver has been in the family for years, and mother wouldn't lose it for the world."

There was a good deal of solid silver in daily use, and Mrs. Waterman kept it in her room at night, or when she was away, and never gave a thought to the danger of having it stolen in a quiet little town like Tuscaloosa. But a burglar was evidently after it now.

"We couldn't get over to your house for your father, could we?" whispered Billy.

"There's no telling how many of them there are," I said. "Likely enough, there's one on guard downstairs."

"And the burglar would escape with everything if he heard us," said Billy.

"Of course he would," I whispered; "for—— Oh, Billy!"

"What?" eagerly.

"My brother George is at home for a day or two, and I heard mother say that she would put George and his wife in my room, because my Uncle Harry and his wife have the spare room."

"Well?" said Billy.

"Let's telegraph George. He's the lightest sleeper, 'cause he works so much nights. He'd hear it if we telegraphed him."

Billy's instrument was on a table in a little bay-window. We groped our way over to the table. There were some heavy draperies on a rod across the bay-window. We pulled these draperies together to deaden the clicking of the instrument, and Billy brought a blanket from the bed and threw it over the table; and then I slipped my hand under it, and called, "George—George."

We waited breathlessly for a reply over the wire, but none came; and I again called, "George—George."

Instantly there was a reply, "What is it?"

"There are burglars in Mr. Waterman's house. Get father and Uncle Harry and come."

In a minute the reply came, "We are coming."

Billy and I had been wonderfully self-possessed, but now we were so excited we could hardly keep our tongues still. My heart went like a trip-hammer, and I could feel that Billy was quivering with excitement. We kept looking out of the window, and in a moment we saw in the half-moonlight three figures coming across our back yard.

My Uncle Harry was Sheriff of an adjoining county, and was accustomed to handling all sorts of rough fellows. He was perfectly fearless, and he and father were both powerful men, while brother George was very strong and active. They had an easy victory, however, for they met one of the burglars coming out of the back door, and he was caught and silenced before he could give an alarm to his confederate, who was up in Mr. Waterman's room.

Father and Uncle Harry waited in silence for a moment or two, one on either side of the back door, while George,

revolver in hand, kept guard over the bound burglar. In a moment or two the second burglar came down the back stairs, and walked right into the arms of my stalwart Uncle Harry, and was captured before he could recover from his surprise. He had in a bag on his back all the valuables from Mr. Waterman's room. The burglars were marched down to the jail, and brother George came back and spent the rest of the night with Billy and me.

News of the burglary quickly reached Eddyville, and Mr. and Mrs. Waterman came home before noon the next day. Billy and I were great heroes for several days, and were witnesses at the trial of the burglars, who were sent to the penitentiary for a number of years. I am glad to say that I have never had a second experience with burglars.

DICK'S "SCHEME."

BY GRACE SCHUYLER.

"DICK ! Say, shall we go ?"
"Oh yes, Dick !—let's run away !—It seems as if I couldn't endure it here any longer !"

Louis and Wade Dundas, eight and seven years old, were gazing anxiously up into the face of their big fourteen-year-old brother, and waiting for his decision.

They were standing on the verandah of a beautiful house which overlooked Seneca Lake. A winding path led across the lawn and along the edge of a deep, wild ravine down to a rustic summer-house which overhung the pebbly beach below. Some steps led down to a pretty boat-house on the beach. There were row-boats here, which the boys could use at any time.

In the roomy stables were three pretty ponies belonging to these boys. The front door, which stood wide open, showed within the house large, beautiful rooms through which they were free to play and wander as they liked.

A pouring rain made boating or pony-riding out of the question just now, but the library just off the great hall was full of interesting books, and the cushioned window-seats and easy-chairs made it a delightful place in which to spend a rainy day. The play-room and workshop up in the attic were equally ideal retreats for a boy who was not in a literary mood.

"It's easy to say 'Let's run away,'" replied Dick tragically, "but you little fellows would be sure to spoil it all by getting homesick or something. You could hardly rough it as I could."

Louis and Wade looked indignant. "Well, you'd better believe we wouldn't get homesick any quicker'n you would, Dick Dundas!" exclaimed Wade wrathfully. "What's home any way now, with papa and mamma in Europe, and only cross old Cousin Eleanor to take their place?"

Up to the previous day this same Cousin Eleanor had been considered anything but cross by the boys; and she was only eight years older than Dick.

When she came to Fair Acres to take charge of the boys during their parents' absence, she had at once entered into their affairs and shared in their fun. Indeed, so anxious was she to make home happy for them that she failed to hold them in due restraint; and when, after three weeks of unbridled fun and jollity, a question arose in which she considered it her duty to render a decision adverse to Dick's wishes, she found her authority scouted by that young man.

"Oh, come now, Cousin Eleanor," he had said, ending the argument, "ladies don't know anything about these things. Try to stop crying, and play with the little boys while I am away. I'll be back some time this evening."

He raced down to the steamboat landing, where he joined an excursion going to a horse-race across the lake.

Nahum, the old black coachman, was sent post-haste in pursuit, but arrived too late to stop the truant, who stood waving his hat triumphantly from the upper deck of the boat.

Cousin Eleanor and Nahum were both on the wharf, awaiting the boat's return. Eleanor looked pale, and as if she had been crying all day. Dick had not enjoyed himself. His conscience had been pricking him ever since the morning, and he would have told her so and begged her pardon, had she not at that moment seized his arm and tried to shake him.

That shake was an unwise measure on Eleanor's part; but she was quite worn out with anxiety and nervousness, and hardly knew what she was doing. Upon arriving at the house, Nahum was ordered to escort Dick to his room, supperless, and to lock him in.

The next morning she informed the boys that in order to

keep them out of mischief she had resolved to give them some lessons every day during the three weeks which might elapse before their parents' return.

"I am sorry to put an end to your holidays," she said, "but I can't let you run wild. If I teach you a little every day, I shall at least know where you are. We will begin at nine o'clock to-morrow morning. You can amuse yourself as you like to-day!"

The boys wandered out on the verandah, where they began their conversation about running away.

"I have a scheme. I'll tell you that much," Dick confessed presently, in a mysterious undertone. "A fine one it is, too! I made it up last night after Cousin Eleanor shook me. And now that she has sprung this school business on us, I feel more like carrying it out than ever. Come over in the hammock, and I'll tell you something about it."

There was much whispering in the hammock, Lou and Wade clapped their hands and kicked up their heels over Dick's scheme in a way which proved that it was highly satisfactory to them.

"It is more like a strike, you see, than running away. It'll just bring Cousin Eleanor to terms and give us our vacation rights," explained Dick. "Papa never wanted us to study in vacation. We've got a right to strike, and we must lose no time getting ready. We must get everything done before night!"

During the remainder of the day the boys were busy running back and forth between the house and boat-house and in riding to the village, where they made rather extensive purchases with their pocket-money at the grocer's and baker's.

Cousin Eleanor left them severely alone, feeling confident that they were too much subdued by the doom which hung over them to get into mischief. Indeed, at supper-time they were all so quiet and well-behaved that she half-repent-ed of her hasty action, and resolved to discontinue the lessons after a few days, if the boys were good.

The boys went to bed surprisingly early. About nine

o'clock three figures might have been seen climbing from one of the upper windows out upon the long, sloping roof which covered the kitchen quarters. Cautiously they crept down to the branches of a great maple-tree which grew close to the house, and in a few moments were on the ground.

Keeping in the shadows of the trees, they hurried on down to the shore, scampered along the beach for a few rods, and then, turning into the ravine, hastened up it in the direction of the house.

The trees which grew along its upper edge shut out every gleam of the moonlight, but the boys knew the path, and made their way easily through the darkness without falling into the brook.

Dick commanded absolute silence until they should reach their destination; and they hastened on in Indian file till Dick suddenly called under his breath, "Halt!"

Turning, he began to climb, feeling carefully about among the vines and undergrowth till within ten feet of the top of the precipice.

"Here we are!" he muttered, and instantly disappeared before his brothers' astonished eyes, seemingly swallowed up by the rocks. Then the snapping of a match was heard, and a bright light shining out revealed Dick standing upright before them, just within the narrow entrance of what seemed a natural cave.

He now held a lighted lantern in one hand, while with the other hand he pulled the little boys in after him.

"Now, then, I'll tell you all—all!" he exclaimed dramatically.

Up to this moment they had known nothing at all about what they were doing. He had only allowed them to carry their stores to the boat-house, whence he had conveyed them mysteriously into the ravine.

They looked about in amazement. Dick had lighted two or three candles now, and everything showed distinctly. They were in what seemed like a neatly plastered room, without windows or doors except for the jagged aperture through

which they had entered. A large wolf-skin rug was on the floor and several unframed, gaily coloured pictures were on the walls.

Heaped in one corner were the blankets, dishes, and provisions which had been hastily collected during the day.

"Whew!" ejaculated Wade. "What is it?"

"And where is it?" added Lou.

Dick laughed delighted. "I've named it 'The Robber's Cave,'" he said. "That's what it is; and it is within twenty yards of our side porch—that's where it is! Nobody will ever dream of looking here for us, for not a soul knows about it. Barlow Bradley -- the fellow who lived here last year, before we bought the place—told me about it, and I've kept it a secret. I thought when Tom Briggs came he and I would have some fun in it, and not let you kids know about it."

"Who made it?" Wade called out.

"Barlow's father had it made for a cistern," Dick explained, "but it was too near the edge of the ravine, and one spring there was a landslide just here and the bricks bulged out and all the water leaked out. Then they just took out the pump and had the place sodded over, so it doesn't show a bit up there.

"I've been here lots of times this summer," Dick went on. "I've made the door bigger, and I've put up the pictures and things. The sun shines in like anything in the mornings if you tie the vines back, and it is just as dry and nice as can be."

Lou and Wade were nearly speechless with delight.

"What a splendiferous place!" said Lou, by-and-by. "It'll be the best fun we ever had in our lives, and it'll serve Cousin Eleanor just right if she *is* a little scared about us. What did you say in your note to her, Dick?"

"Just a few lines: 'We boys are safe and happy and free. Don't worry about us. We will come back when that school nonsense is given up. Just run up the flag from the verandah as a sign that you give up. Our spies will tell us, and we will return.'"

"What do you mean by 'our spies'?" asked Wade.

"Ourselves, of course," replied Dick. We can climb up and take a survey from behind the bushes any time. That's the fun of being so near. I've never come here that way for fear of discovery, but it's easy enough. Now we may as well eat a biscuit apiece, to fortify ourselves, and then turn in."

The biscuits were eaten, and Dick hung a blanket across the entrance. Then he put out the lights, and in a few minutes the three boys were lying on the fur rugs, covered with blankets and fast asleep.

Next morning there was great dismay at the house. Every one began searching for the missing ones, or for some clue by which their whereabouts might be discovered. Nahum presently found Dick's note in the key-hole of Eleanor's room. He listened intently while she read it aloud.

"Don' you worry no mo', Miss Eleanor!" he exclaimed; "dem boys is hidin' somewhar roun' dis yer place safe enough, an' we'll find 'em sure. Spies!—dey's deir own spies, and dey'll be getting hongry bimeby and comin' home!"

"Sure, an' I don't know about that!" exclaimed the cook; "the b'ys run off wid all me fresh bake of cookies yisterday. They made me think they did be havin' a bit of a picnic, and it's meself that roasted a chicken for 'em—the spalpeens!—and I'm thinkin' they won't be getting hungry very soon!"

"Oh dear, oh dear!" wailed Eleanor, sinking upon the stairs and bursting into tears. "Why did I ever consent to take care of those poor, dear boys? First I spoiled them till they got naughty, and then I was so cross with them that I've driven them away from home! Maybe they have all been drowned! Oh, what shall I say to their father and mother?"

"Now, Miss Eleanor, don' be so deprestigated 'bout dem boys," says Nahum consolingly. "I feel somehow or nudder dat if yer'd jest run up dat flag——"

"What! Give up to those horrid boys? Never!" Miss Eleanor, lifting her face from her wet handkerchief, showed her still tearful eyes ablaze with wrath. "Nothing shall drive

me to that. They shall have the lessons now, even if they *are* drowned!"

But at the dreary thought of their possible watery grave the inconsistent young lady began to cry again. "No, Nahum, we must hunt till we find them."

The stables, the boat-house, the attic, the woods, the ravine, the treetops, even the cornfields were thoroughly searched. The boys, wild with excitement, watched the hunt with deepest interest, peering down into the ravine from behind the screen of vines, or climbing up to study the movements of their pursuers from behind the thick bushes which grew along the edge of the ravine.

"Oh, I tell you this is the most interesting life I've ever lived," said little Wade, with a sigh of content, as, late in the evening, the three sat near the door of the cave, feasting deliciously upon chicken, cake, and peaches, while the moonlight streamed in upon them.

They slept rather uneasily that night, however, and early the next morning awoke to find rain pouring outside and the cave feeling cold and damp. Water had leaked through the cracks in the wall, and soaked the bread, crackers, and cake into an unwholesome pasty mass.

The chicken was already eaten, and the "canned goods"—corn, tomatoes, and green peas, of which Dick had purchased largely with a reckless disregard of his total lack of cooking facilities—were not appetising eaten cold on a damp and chilly morning.

The rain poured in torrents all day. The boys did not try to venture out often, but sat in the cave wrapped in their blankets. The search for them seemed abandoned.

Dick was very kind to the little boys. He told them stories and tried to entertain them with games, but though they bore up bravely, Dick felt that they were not exactly happy.

No word of complaint was uttered; only Lou said once meditatively, "This is Friday. It is the day cook always makes doughnuts." Whereat Wade said hopefully, "I wonder if maybe Cousin Eleanor hasn't run up the flag!" He stole

up the bank to "take a peep," but returned looking crestfallen and depressed.

The next morning the rain was still falling. The air was colder; little pools of water had collected in hollows on the floor of the cave.

"My throat feels kind of queer," said Wade, in excuse, when he declined to eat some "Liebig's Extract" spread on wet sponge-cake.

"Just open your mouth and let me look in," ordered Dick.

He was frightened to see how red and inflamed the little throat looked, and made up his mind promptly.

"Wade, I'm sorry, but I've got to send you home—straight off. Walk down the ravine, and go up to the house from the boat-house. Tell 'em you are sick, and that I sent you home. Say Lou and I are all right and going to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer. ~~It~~ ^{It} is all right, Wade. You have acted like a little trump down here, and I won't forget it!"

"I didn't ask to go home, did I, Dick?" said Wade, dimpling all over with delight as he prepared to leave his comrades. "But I guess I'm going to be real sick, and maybe I can get the cook to give me another chicken, and I'll let it down to you with a string when nobody is watching, and I won't tell a word about where you are."

Dick wrapped a blanket carefully about him as Wade started to climb down into the ravine.

Neither Lou nor Dick said much as they watched the little blanketed figure hurrying down the ravine in the pouring rain; but after an hour or so Dick, looking sharply at Lou, who was winking back some tears, demanded, "Is your throat sore, too?"

"N—no—not exactly sore," replied Lou, in a weak and trembling voice, "but there seems a kind of hard swelling there—and I don't feel as if I could exactly swallow; and—oh, I wish mamma would come home!"

Tears were streaming over his face now. Dick looked at him queerly for a minute.

"I think, Lou, you had better go home and look after

Wade. No! I don't mind being left alone—not a bit; it will be rather jollier for me, if anything."

"And I may be getting diphtheria, you know," said Louis, radiant with smiles; "and you see it's sort of cold here, and anyway we wouldn't want to let the doctor know about this place, so I suppose maybe I ought to go home."

"Yes, that is so," replied Dick, rather grimly.

When Lou, a wet and dripping figure, arrived at the house, nobody happened to be in sight; and, regardless of mud on the light carpets, he ran blithely up the stairs, thinking he had never realised before what a beautiful house it was.

At his bedroom door he heard Eleanor's voice. She was reading aloud to Wade, who, with bandaged throat, was lying in bed, looking very happy and peaceful.

Eleanor sprang up as Lou entered, and took him into her arms, wet as he was.

"You darling!" she exclaimed, "are you ill, too?"

"There was a lump in my throat, but I don't feel it now," said Lou candidly. "Still, if you don't mind, I think I'd just as lief go to bed with Wade—it looks so white and soft."

When he felt the soft coverings being tucked in over his aching body, he added gratefully, "I can't tell you where we have been, nor where Dick is now, but I'm real sorry I've been naughty."

"Lou," said Wade, "just think! Cousin Eleanor's given up teaching us. She thinks we will be good now without a school."

"Why, then, what's the reason we can't run up the flag, so Dick will know and come home again?" cried Lou joyfully.

But Cousin Eleanor looked suddenly very stern and determined.

She was by no means inclined to capitulate in that way. "No, indeed!" she said. "Did I send him away? He went of his own free will, and I shall not coax him to return. I do not blame you little boys much, for you only followed his lead; but I am very much displeased with Dick!"

Lou and Wade were not allowed to leave the house all day,

though they longed for a chance to slip away with food for poor Dick, who was growing painfully hungry.

Towards evening the rain ceased and the sun appeared, peering for a moment over a dark bank of clouds upon the soaking, steaming earth; and with the sunshine Dick came out of his hole and lurked among the bushes.

As he stood gazing longingly toward the house, a carriage came rolling rapidly up the drive, and poor Dick saw his father and mother spring out and hurry up the steps to be greeted there by the whole household. There was a great confusion of joyful voices, but above the tumult he could hear the words, "Where is Dick?" "Why is not Dick here?"

No one answered at first, but presently Dick could see that Cousin Eleanor was explaining his absence, for Mr. Dundas suddenly looked very grave. Then every one went on into the house and the door was shut.

Dick turned, crawled down into his den, threw himself upon his damp rug, and groaned aloud: "Oh dear! oh dear! This is a little more than I can bear. They thought they'd take us by surprise, and they've done it. What will they think of me? It will take away all their pleasure in coming home to hear how I've been going on. I won't go now till I am sent for. If father is willing to let me in the house, he will send the boys to let me know."

The rain had begun to fall again. The walls were leaking more than ever. Little streamlets trickled down on every side. Dick curled himself up in the driest spot and tried to sleep.

Meanwhile, Mr. Dundas had been talking with Lou and Wade, and convinced them that they were not in honour bound to conceal Dick's whereabouts from his parents. So they told where the old cistern could be found.

"Poor Dicky!" cried his mother. "He must not stay in such a dreadful place an hour longer, no matter how badly he has behaved."

"No, indeed!" replied her husband; "if he needs any further punishment I can banish him to the attic, where a

least he will be both higher and dryer than he is at present ! Get on your rubber coats, boys ; the young man must be brought up to the house at once. You show me the place, and I will call him. A nice way for my eldest son to welcome his father ! ”

Mrs. Dundas and Eleanor stood on the verandah watching the others as they crossed the lawn. As they reached the spot, the ground under their feet seemed to tremble. They sprang back ; the earth was sinking before their eyes. A roaring, rumbling sound, like the noise of an avalanche, echoed through the ravine.

A cry of “ Help ! O papa, help me ! ” came from the hole in the ground which had suddenly opened before them.

The badly built walls of the cistern, weakened still more by the heavy rains, had given way, and Dick was lying there buried under so much of the earth, bricks, and cement as had not gone rattling off with the landslide down to the bottom of the ravine.

Dick was dreadfully alarmed, and his father scarcely less so. Mr. Dundas feared the boy was killed, and Dick was not sure that he was not.

But after a few minutes of hard work on the part of Mr. Dundas and old Nahum, Dick was freed from the weight of bricks and cement which had showered down upon him ; and, scratched and bleeding, bruised and muddy, he was up on the lawn again with his mother’s arms about him.

His Cousin Eleanor stood there, too. She had been crying bitterly over his temporary burial. Dick noticed this, and, half-fainting as he was, he managed to say, “ Cousin Eleanor, won’t you run up that flag now ? ”

“ No, indeed, I shall not—you little wretch ! ” sobbed the young lady, drying her eyes as she spoke.

A little later Dick was lying in bed, his body pretty well covered with bandages and strips of sticking-plaster. His head was on his mother’s lap ; his father held his hand ; Lou and Wade were perched upon the footboard, and Eleanor sat in a low chair near by.

"Well," said she, "I don't care—*much*—if you *are* hurt, Dick Dundas! This is the first really peaceful hour I have known for days, and it seems perfectly blissful to see you lying there so good and quiet."

"You oughtn't to be glad he's hurt, Cousin Eleanor!" exclaimed Lou indignantly.

But Dick replied, "Yes, she ought. That's all right, Eleanor. You didn't give up and I didn't give up, but I tell you I'm glad the thing fell in. I haven't felt so happy as I do now any time since I began to carry out my scheme!"

ADrift IN A BALLOON.

BY ALICE F. JACKSON.

THE great event at our sports last year was a balloon ascent. Hundreds of people who didn't care a snap for the races came to see the balloon; and the fellows' elder sisters and cousins and aunts all put on their best to do honour to the *Lady Rita*.

Ted said it was in honour of the *Lady Rita's* master; but I don't believe that myself. For although he was a clever engineer, and jolly, and all that, he was over thirty, and fat—very fat, and girls think a lot of appearances, you know!

Mr. Harrington was Ted's uncle, or second cousin, or something of that sort, and he had made a great many aerial voyages very successfully.

Whatever his particular relationship may have been to Ted, it was a lucky connection for both of us; for on the strength of it he invited Ted to accompany him on his voyage, and this brought me into it, for I was Ted's particular chum.

The races, etc., were just over, and everybody was getting impatient to see the balloon ascent; for, as the crowning event of the afternoon, this had been kept for the last.

"Pity the wind's rising so fast," I said; for the *Lady Rita*, which a couple of hours ago had been flying gracefully above the car, was now swaying and heaving like a mere plaything of the wind.

Ted grinned. "Do you funk it, Charlie?"

I scorned to answer.

"There are a dozen chaps who will be delighted to take your place. Only say the word."

"Now, boys, in you get," said Mr. Harrington.

And in we got, followed to the edge of the car by a lot of envious fellows, while the crowd cried one to another, "They are going to start the balloon! They are going to start the balloon!"

We took our places in the car, and in a little while everything was in readiness for the ascent. It was just a quarter to six. The sun was shining brightly, and the wind was blowing brightly, too.

"Hold on to your hat, Charlie," advised Ted, with another grin. He thought he had a good right to grin; he had made a short voyage through the air once before with Mr. Harrington, and this was my trial trip. And though of course I wasn't going to funk it with an experienced aeronaut like his uncle in command, still, I own I should have felt happier if the wind hadn't become so rough. And it seemed that Mr. Harrington had had a good deal of trouble to get the balloon filled with gas.

However, at last everything was in readiness for the start, and Mr. Harrington, who was standing on the edge of the car, sang out the order, "Let go!"

The men who were holding the ropes obeyed, and the next moment a sudden gust of wind carried the *Lady Rita* almost level with the ground against a thick black thorn hedge, and Mr. Harrington, who was standing on the edge of the car, was knocked violently off by the concussion; and the balloon, relieved of his weight—he was a fat man, as I said before, and weighed, I should say, something like fourteen stone—bounced up into the air like lightning, while Ted and I gazed into each other's eyes with faces as pale as chalk!

We heard a great cry—the terrified cry of the panic-stricken people who were watching the ascent; and, looking over the side of the car, we saw them, like small black specks, tearing across the field.

"Oh, great heavens, Ted!"

But no answer came from Ted's open mouth. We were flying higher and higher, and speeding away over the town;

over the church towers and steeples. Oh, the awful height ! it made one's head giddy to look down.

"Ted ! Ted !" I screamed, shaking him by the arm. But Ted seemed to be turned to stone.

"O God, help us ! What are we to do ? O God !" I cried, looking wildly up into the blue sky above. But there was no answer from the blue. We were alone and helpless, flying through space, and going higher, and higher, and higher.

What folly it was to start in that storm of wind ! And oh, if one of us had *only* been dragged from the car instead of Mr. Harrington !

"Ted, speak ! Can't you say something, Ted ? How are we to get this beastly balloon down to earth again ?" And I looked wildly round the car.

There was ballast, of course, in the shape of five or six bags of sand, and the grapnel, or anchor, fixed up with a lot of strong claws, and Mr. Harrington's coat, with Mr. Harrington not in it, worse luck !

I had a confused idea that it might be the proper thing to throw out some of the ballast—they were *always* throwing out ballast when they were in danger in "Five Weeks in a Balloon" ; so, tugging at one of the bags of sand, I screamed wildly that I was going to heave it over.

The next moment Ted's grip was on my arm, and he cried out, "Stop, you ass, Charlie !" His voice had come back at last. And in his relief at finding it again the tears rushed out of his eyes.

"If you lighten the car, the balloon will go higher still. Leg go that bag. Great Scott, we *are* up a tree !"

"What are we to do ?" I blubbered, crying, to keep him company. I had never found myself in such a fix before. We cried hard for a few minutes, and I am sure we both prayed. Then Ted lifted his head ; his lips were very white, but he looked as if a happy thought had just come to him.

"Of course, we must open the valve," he said, "and let out some of the gas. As the gas escapes, the balloon is bound to descend. That's how Harrington manages it. I

remember watching him the last time. Wait a bit," and he began to examine the aneroid barometer. "Oh! by Jove, Charlie," he added tremulously, "we're five thousand feet above *terra firma*."

All this time we had been simply tearing through space, with not a sound in our ears but the tones of our own awed voices. So tranquil, so still, with just the blue sky above us and the green earth far, far beneath. And though we were travelling so fast, wonderful to say we felt no motion at all.

If only Mr. Harrington had been with us I daresay we should have found it a delightful way of journeying. But we were in too awful a position to think anything delightful just then. And I confess *I* was in a terrible funk.

Ted had been examining the rigging, and had got hold of what he called the valve-rope, through which he said we were going to let the gas escape; but his hands were trembling, and his face was as white as chalk. I got hold of Mr. Harrington's coat, and found myself clasping it as if it had been the aeronaut himself.

"Clink, clank!" Something fell out of one of the pockets, and clattered into the bottom of the car.

"A flask!" I exclaimed, picking it up. "A brandy-flask; and full of brandy, Ted."

And in another minute Ted had taken it from my hand and was holding it to his mouth.

"Hold hard, old boy! It's raw brandy, mind. Great Scott! be careful, Ted, be careful!"

Ted smiled. He gave me back the flask. The colour had come back to his lips.

"Take a sip," he said. "It'll hearten you, old chap. I don't feel so funky now."

I did as he told me, and it seemed to warm me through and through; and I sat quiet, still clutching the coat, watching Ted's movements breathlessly. And in my heart I was crying out, "God! God!" for I couldn't think of any other words; but I guessed it was as good as a prayer.

"Ted," I screamed out presently, "we're getting lower."

"I believe we are," said Ted.

We were, we were! Objects that before from our great height had appeared all-confused and indistinct were getting clearer to our view. We could see little villages distinctly beneath us, and even roads and hedges and lanes.

But the balloon was travelling at such a tremendous rate that we cleared the country in no time; and soon we found ourselves approaching a great town that seemed to stretch for miles. And we were distinctly descending now.

"I don't know whether we shall be able to clear all those buildings," cried Ted, in a voice that trembled with anxiety. "What a cropper we shall come if the car came into concussion with some of those tall chimney-tops!"

"Why don't you open the valve, then, or whatever you call the thing, and let the gas escape? Quick, Ted, we'll drop in the meadows before we reach the town."

But Ted shook his head. "There wouldn't be time," he said. "We're scudding along at such an awful rate that the balloon would descend among the houses as like as not, and we should get pitched out of the car as sure as fate. Our only chance is to clear the town and drop on the other side."

We waited with our hearts in our mouths. The spires and steeples, and endless chimney-tops, seemed to point at us like spears and cannons in a menacing way. We could imagine the car getting impaled on one of those tall spires, and ourselves clattering down among the buildings struggling, grasping, gripping at nothing—only going down, down, down, crashing on the stones beneath.

The feeling was sickening.

I looked at my watch. It was twenty minutes past six. We had started at a quarter to.

And all the time we were sailing swiftly to our doom; helpless, powerless, and at the mercy of wind and gas.

"Of all the rottenest inventions," I murmured, "the rottenest, I think, is a balloon!"

"Heave over some of the ballast, Charlie. Quick! Now's your time!" screamed Ted,

He seized one end of a sand-bag while I got hold of the other, and flop! out it went over the side of the car.

"By Jingo! I hope it won't go crash down on any poor beggar's head!"

"Another, Charlie!" shouted Ted, as the balloon rose again. "Another bag, and, please Heaven, we'll clear the buildings in time."

Out flopped the second bag, and the balloon rose higher still. Hurrah! We were sailing over the town, and at a respectable distance from the steeples.

"It's Hetherington!" both of us cried in a breath.

"Hetherington, where we went to play that football-match last summer!"

"There's the square tower of Trinity Church," I added. "And that's the spire of the new Wesleyan Chapel. Keep your distance," I shouted, shaking my fist at it. "You won't have the pleasure of impaling us this time. And look, look! there's the theatre, and the big Town Hall! Oh, by Jingo! I wonder what the Hetheringtonites are thinking of our balloon?"

Ted didn't say a word. He was gazing at the fields beyond. A long stretch of open country, with here and there an isolated house, and here and there a cluster of thatched cottages.

"We must try to drop there," he said, "and trust to good luck not to come down on any of those cottages."

Another ten minutes of breathless suspense and then——

"Charlie" (he'd grown white as death again), "you take hold of the grapnel, and be ready to throw it out the minute I sing out. *I'm going to open the valve.*"

With my heart beating like a sledge-hammer, I waited for his "*Now!*" and threw out the grapnel as the word left his mouth.

"Whiz!" Like an arrow we seemed to be cleaving the air. Down, down, down! Down went the *Lady Rita* like a parachute.

I heard Ted give a gurgling gasp, I heard myself cry "God!" and before we knew it the grapnel had caught;

the balloon, well-nigh emptied of gas, was bumping slightly on the ground, and Ted and I found ourselves, with mouths wide open, and eyes starting out of our heads, sitting in a bed of Brussels-sprouts, while our ears were almost deafened with shrill, piercing screams—feminine screams.

The next moment two terrified little elderly ladies were threatening us with their trowels, and demanding, in frightened, high-pitched voices, to know who we were and where we'd come from, and "Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Oh, dear me! Oh, dear me!" while a neat little brick-faced slavey, in a befrilled white apron and cap, was howling like a laughing jackass.

"Ladies," gasped Ted, "ladies," and he struggled to his feet and politely took off his cap, "I beg your pardon, ladies; we've come down in a runaway balloon."

"And what business have you to come down in *our* garden, pray? Yah! the horrid thing!" And she flung her trowel at the grapnel. "It's rooted up the whole row of peas and destroyed my French beans. You impudent boys! Couldn't you have descended outside the garden?"

"Madam," implored Ted, still holding his hat in his hand and picking his way out of the Brussels-sprouts, "pray, madam, don't be angry with us. We are only amateur aeronauts, and had no control over the balloon. Indeed, madam, we've had a very narrow escape for our lives. We were going to make the ascent with the celebrated aeronaut, Mr. Harrington, but by an accident he was thrown off the car just as the balloon was ascending; and we found ourselves adrift miles up in the air alone, and helpless, and——"

"We nearly came down on the spire of the Wesleyan Chapel at Hetherington," I added, as Ted paused.

"Good gracious!" cried the little elderly ladies in a chorus, their countenances visibly softening at our hairbreadth escape, while one of them sternly bade the howling slavey stop her screaming.

"If we have spoiled your garden," Ted went on, "Mr. Harrington will willingly pay for the damages to the peas and beans——"

"And Brussels-sprouts," I murmured.

And then, almost before we knew how, the old ladies had conducted us into the house—it was one of the isolated houses we had looked down upon from the balloon—and were pouring out a stream of curious questions, listening excitedly to our answers, and interjecting the following orders to the now silenced slavey :

"Lay the cloth, Janet, and put the cold chicken on the table."

"A few slices of that tongue will go nicely with it too."

"A cup of coffee will warm them up. Their nerves are all unstrung."

And in a little while the good old souls were smiling at us tucking into the good things.

We had just finished our meal and were again entertaining our kind hostesses with accounts of our aerial flight, when we spied Mr. Harrington himself dismounting at the front gate.

His relief was extreme when he discovered us safe and sound, and he was received very graciously by the old ladies, whose appetite for news was still as keen as ever. And then we heard how the aeronaut, alighting unhurt from the car, barring a few scratches from the thorn bushes, had mounted his bicycle in a twinkling and ridden madly after the balloon.

When the *Lady Rita* passed out of sight, he had to trace it by inquiries on the road, and learned that it was speeding away in the direction of Hetherington. He then procured a light cart and a fast-trotting horse—for being a fat man, as I said before, tearing along on a bicycle at a record pace had winded him pretty soon.

Heaps of the Hetheringtonites had witnessed our descent into the old ladies' garden, and willing voices and willing feet had guided him to the place.

Our kind hostesses would not hear of compensation for their peas and beans; they were only too thankful, they declared, that "those dear boys' lives were saved."

And so were we.

HOW BREEZE SAVED THE GAME.

BY LOUISE SEYMOUR HOUGHTON.

THE Nubbles nine *must* have a man for centre. Hal Otis must come in and take second in the place of Rob Ryder, who was ill, and that would leave nobody for the centre.

It was an important matter, for the game with the high school was the last and deciding game of the series; and there was also the exhibition game on last day.

Joe Trelawney, the captain, had plenty of advice on the subject. He was discussing the matter one afternoon with the regular members of the nine, *minus* poor Rob.

"Well, why *not* take Cy Liddon, anyway?" asked Breeze Bunting, the little short stop.

"Oh," said Garry Sutor, right field, "Breeze has swallowed that fellow, of course, big stories and all. *He* hasn't any doubt that he was centre field on the Cheltenham nine."

"Well," said Captain Joe, "let's see him play, since Breeze thinks so much of him. Trot out your prodigy, Zephyr. It's time for practice."

Cy Liddon, Breeze's prodigy, had but lately come to the Nubbles, at a season of the year and under circumstances which gave room not only for conjecture, but for some little indignation. He hailed from Cheltenham, having left that famous preparatory school in the middle of the winter term to go South with his mother. Now, well on in spring term, here he was at the Nubbles, because, as he averred, it would be easier to make up back work here than at Cheltenham!

Of course the boys repelled the insinuation that the

standard of the Nubbles was lower than that of Cheltenham ; but Liddon was tall, graceful, and good-looking. He might not be very strong with his books, but if he could play he would be no discredit to the nine.

At the practice game Liddon managed to find the ball once, and he certainly was a swift runner. In short, the emergency was pressing, and Liddon was regularly installed in the vacant place.

He practised manfully enough during the next week, but without doing anything which gave reason to think that the Cheltenham team had suffered heavily in losing him. He made no particular figure at the bat, and a good many of the balls that went his way slipped through his fingers as if they had been greased.

"My hands are soft after being in Florida," he said. "They will be hard enough before the game." Toward the end of the week there did seem to be some improvement.

The high school were counting on a victory. They knew that it was a trying time with the Nubbles nine. To lose a captain and be forced to take on a new man in the very midst of the season was more than any team could well endure. When at last the day came, the high school had still further reason for confidence.

Tom Hyer, of the high school nine, had a cousin at Cheltenham, and Tom himself was looking forward to going there next year.

Tom had invited his cousin Jack to come out that Saturday, and bring two or three fellows to see the game. When the Cheltenham boys had arrived, it was also very natural that Tom should mention that the new man on the Nubbles team hailed from the Cheltenham nine.

"I guess not!" exclaimed Jack. "We have the same nine we have had all along."

"He says he played centre field," insisted Tom.

"He didn't," said Everett Stacy. "Bert Higbee has been centre fielder ever since 'prep' year."

"What's the fellow's name?" asked another Cheltenham boy.

"Cy Liddon," replied Tom.

"Whew-w-w!" whistled Jack. "I say, that's a good one! You remember him, don't you, fellows? The man that substituted for Bert in a practice game one day last fall, and muffed nearly every ball that went his way? He never got a chance again!"

Of course the news flew to the Nubbles like wildfire. Garry Sutor heard it first of all, and rushed after Breeze and Joe and Hal Otis, who were on their way down to the spot. For once Breeze was speechless with consternation. Joe was hardly less appalled.

"And to think there isn't a man we can trust in his place!" he ejaculated.

Breeze was the first to recover from the shock.

"After all, are we worse off than we were before?" he asked. "Cy has been training like a major all the week, and he really is getting to play a pretty fair game—there is so much depending on it for him, you know. Suppose he did brag more than he had a right to! He isn't altogether bad, and if he is trying to make up for the past, don't you think we ought to give him a chance?"

"Give him a chance!" said Hal Otis. "What sort of a chance are we giving him if we take the word of a stranger against his? The Cheltenham chap may be telling the truth or may be lying. The square thing to do is look up Liddon instantly, and tell him what's said, and give him a chance to explain."

"Well, that's so," said Joe, whose sense of justice was strong. "Suppose he's guilty—what then?"

"Put him off!" said Hal sternly. "I'd sooner play short one man than with such a sneak."

"Hey, but we've got the school to think of!" said Captain Joe. "And we haven't time to investigate Cy now. The game should be called in two minutes."

"We've got to stick up for one another now," said Breeze. "Suppose it was a mistake putting him on—that was my fault, you know. But now he's on, we must see him through

just as if he was not accused. We've got to presume him innocent. What do school spirit and good fellowship mean if they don't mean that?"

"For better, for worse, hey?" said Joe, all his old cheerfulness restored. "I rather think you're right, Breeze, old boy. Cy shall play, anyway."

Cy had gone down to the field ahead of the others, and was passing ball with Teddy Grant, the catcher. He had not heard of the Cheltenham boys' arrival, and it was not until, the high school having won the toss, the Nubbles were scattering to their places in the field that he caught sight of Jack Hyer, talking in a rather important way with the umpire. Cy Liddon stopped short and turned white.

Breeze, who had had his eye on him all the time, understood. He gave Cy a resounding slap on the shoulder as he crossed his path on the way to short, saying, in a half-careless way, "Keep up a stiff upper lip, old fellow, and play your prettiest. Remember the Nubbles all stand by one another."

"Does he mean because this is my first game," thought Cy, "or does he know?"

A strange sensation swelled his heart as he ran to his place in the out field. No, he had not always been an honourable boy, but it was true what little Breeze said—he had seen already that the Nubbles did all stand by one another. Whatever might betide, he would never give them cause to regret standing by him.

He put his heart into his work as he had never done before. A ball might come to him red-hot—he would not miff it to-day.

While the thought was passing through his mind he heard a resounding thud on the bat, and Joe's voice ringing, "Centre!" above the multitudinous cries of the high school, "Good for three bases! Go it, Tom, go it, old boy!"

The ball was sailing in Cy's direction, but far, far up in the blue. It would be away out of bounds before it came in reach. The centre fielder tore over the ground with that swift, antelope-like stride of his,

How long it seemed to him! How far away the shouts seemed, coming over the field: "Keep it up, Tom! Go it for third!" Then another voice that Cy knew well—the little short stop's voice—cried, "You've got it, you've got it, old boy!" and Cy was standing on the very verge of the river, his hands outstretched far over the stream, and then the ball dropped straight into his open palms.

As he sped, panting, back toward the diamond, the air rang with the Nubbles's triumphant yell. It was the third man out, and the nine were already making for their benches; but Breeze was waiting for Cy, and again clapped him on the back as he came up, all out of breath.

"What did I tell you?" ~~cried~~ the little fellow proudly. "I knew you could play good ball, Cy. You'll save it for us yet!"

Cy was ninth on the batting list, and nowhere as coach. He had therefore nothing to do in this half-inning but sit on the bench and yell for Nubbles; but never did boy put such heart into a yell as he.

Joe got a run, of course. Joe had a way of being successful, whatever he undertook, and though Arthur Wells, the third baseman, had fouled out, and Teddy had been caught stealing second, Joe managed to come in on Breeze's hit, while Breeze himself was left on first when Garry Sutor struck out.

The score was one to nothing in favour of Nubbles when the high school came again to the bat.

The second inning told a different story. Either Chick Folsom, the pitcher, wasn't in as good form as usual, or the high school had "got on" to his curves. Three men scored in succession, and an unlucky passed ball of Teddy Grant's let in another man.

Though the Nubbles woke up and made some splendid play after that, there was no getting around the fact that the high school had made four runs; and when Ben Hardy, the big first baseman, went to the bat, and Hal and Chick came up, ready to follow, not all Joe's jolly coolness, nor little Breeze's elaborate cheerfulness as he stood on the coaching-

line, could disguise the fact that the Nubbles were a little down-hearted.

Ben did manage to hit the ball, a feeble stroke that sent it straight back to the pitcher; but the pitcher fumbled the ball, and Ben was safe past the bag before it came down his way.

But his heart failed as Hal struck out, and Chick sent a little pop-up fly just where the catcher could most easily get it. Now, all chance of his making a run depended on Cy, the weakest batsman on the team. Cy came to the bat with his heart in his mouth. He wondered what the rest of the team would say if they knew how few real games he had ever played, and the thought did not tend to strengthen his arms.

As Cy gave his bat a preliminary swing, little Breeze cried out, "You're good for a hit, Cy, and don't you forget it!"

It was like an electric shock nerving his arms. He swung his bat with a strength he had never felt before, and when it gave a resounding ring, and he felt the tingle of the strike, he started away toward first as if his feet were winged.

"Good for you, Cy!" cried Breeze, running down to take Joe's place as the captain went up to the bat. "You've done all we wanted—given Joe a chance at the bat. We're sure of a run now, if two men are out."

Alas, the fates were against the Nubbles! Joe made a hit to be sure, and reached second base, while Cy was easily at third; but the ball got to home plate a good two seconds before Ben did, and the inning was over with two men on bases, and the score four to one for high school.

Nubbles retrieved the game somewhat in the third inning, for the high school was shut out without a run, and Arthur and Teddy both scored, partly by good playing and partly on high school errors. But still the score was four to three against Nubbles.

The fourth inning gave high school another run. Then Hal Otis came to the bat. Hal got his base on balls, and then got caught stealing second while Chick Folsom was

fooling with the bat. He struck out, of course. Chick generally did strike out when he didn't strike a little pop-up fly; and now it was Cy's turn again.

He felt more confidence now. If he had not covered himself with glory, that long fly in the first inning had made the team believe in his fielding abilities, and they were not looking for much from him at the bat. It was unlucky, surely, that he should be third man again; but he would give Joe a chance.

"You'll do it, old fellow; wait for a good one!" cried Breeze, as the third ball whizzed by below the level of the bat. "You've got on to his curves; make him give you a good one!"

The "good one" came, and Cy struck it fair and square. The bat dropped from his hand, and he was skimming down toward first base amid the cheers of the Nubbles, when from the far corner of the grand-stand, strong and clear above the Nubbles's "hi-yi-yi!" rose an insistent, well-sustained cry: "Never—on—Cheltenham!"

It struck the boy like a shot. He staggered, half-stopped, would have fallen. The Nubbles's yell quavered off in sudden bewilderment, when just at Cy's ear rose another cry: "Liddon for Nubbles!"

It was little Breeze tearing along beside him down to first; and then came Joe's strong, cheery voice, "Go it, Cy, hard, hard!" and the Nubbles's cheer rang out again as with a long, swift leap that carried him half-way down the field Cy crossed the bag half a second before the ball whizzed in from left field.

It was all right now. Joe came to the bat, and got a base on balls. Arthur made a hit, and Teddy got to first on an error. And though he afterward got caught napping on second, the score was five to four in favour of Nubbles, and the field resounded with the school's triumphant cry.

It was steady work on both sides during the next four innings. The score crawled up slowly. Nubbles nine, high school eight, was the way it stood when the visitors came to the bat for the last time.

More than once during those four innings had Cy been "rattled" by the sneering yell from the far corner of the grandstand, "Never—on—Cheltenham!"

It had made him strike wild when he stood at the bat. Once it had caused him to miff a fly in centre; but neither time had much depended on him, and the last time the sneering cry had been fairly hissed down by the Nubbles, who by that time, to the last man, knew the story and were incensed by the attempt of the high school to win the game by means so unmanly.

But it was the little short stop who had kept Cy from utterly giving out under the repeated stings. He seemed always close at hand at the critical moment, and his newly invented cry, "Liddon for Nubbles!" would be taken up and echoed by all the school, till the boy took heart again.

It was the last inning, and the first man on the high school batting list was at the bat.

"Now, Cy, do your best for Nubbles," Joe had said, as they started for the out field, and Breeze had added, "The Nubbles always stand by one another, you know, Cy."

Cy felt it all; he did not know, nor did any of the boys, how much more real and potent is moral force than physical, but he did know that he felt stronger, more confident, in better trim for work now than at the beginning of the game, and it made him wonder at himself.

The first man made a safe hit and stole second easily before the second man made his base. Then came Ned Willis to the bat, the swiftest runner on the team.

At a signal from Joe the out field had drawn close in; if Willis found the ball it wouldn't be for the out field.

As Cy came up to second Hal Otis, he caught a glance from Breeze which reminded him once again how loyal a support he had in the little short stop. The thud of the ball followed quick upon that thought, and Joe's cry of "Centre!" was hardly out of his lips when Cy stood under the ball, and it was off again for home plate.

Straight into Teddy's hands it flew, and he, touching Tom

Hyer as he came up panting, threw it to third a good five seconds before the runner reached the bag.

It had all been the work of a moment. The side was out ; the very field rocked with resounding Nubbles' cheers, and the boys, streaming into the diamond, caught up Teddy Grant, caught up Arthur Wells, caught up Cy Liddon, carrying them around the field in a tumultuous triumphal procession.

"It was Cy saved the game!" shrieked little Breeze, beside himself with delight. "Hi-yi-yi, Liddon!"

But Cy struggled out of the arms that encircled him, and catching up the little short stop lifted him to his shoulder.

"Here's the man who saved the game!" he cried. "Hi-yi-yi, Bunting!"

And though little Breeze ejaculated in Cy's ear, "Why, man, I didn't so much as have a chance!" the whole school took up the cry, and the air rang with "Hi-yi-yi, Bunting!"

When this died away they turned again to Cy. His plain gratitude to Breeze had more warmed their hearts to himself.

"Hi-yi-yi! Liddon! Liddon!" They lifted him again into the air. They had forgotten the Cheltenham visitors' imputation against Cy's character. But the mercy he had received was effectual in more than bracing his nerve for the game.

"Don't—don't," he protested. "Don't—I'm ashamed to have you do it—I don't deserve it. I—I—it's true what they said! I wasn't ever really on Cheltenham except——"

"Oh, come off, Cy!" cried Hal Otis, stern to brazen offenders, but quick to appreciate so public a repentance. "Come off, Cy! Not another word."

Hal placed his hand over Cy's mouth as they let him down. "It's all right now, old man—now that you've made a clean breast of it. That's enough!"

"Liddon! Liddon for Nubbles," roared Breeze, and this was re-echoed.

Then they crowded round the comrade their good-fellowship had redeemed—crowded close round to conceal from all but themselves how he struggled and sobbed to keep back his repentant and grateful tears.

HOW HAL GOT HIS SPARERIBS.

BY CON DURA.

HAL CARSON sat on the north porch of his father's bungalow and poured forth his complaints into his own and Barney's ears.

"I'm tired of curry, *dall bhat*, and fish all the time. Haven't seen a beefsteak for two months, and as for fresh pork, spareribs, and sausage, such as we used to have at home at 'hog-killin'' time, why, I haven't had a taste since I left Iowa. These Mohammedans and Hindoos never have any 'hog-killin's.'"

Barney cocked his head on one side with the profound wisdom of a highly enthusiastic dog, his stub tail vibrating like the balance-wheel in a watch, looked his master in the face, and spoke once with suppressed emotion, then gazed longingly down the steep hill through the brush, hoping to see a jackal which he might punish for the shortcomings of the country.

Hal Carson was an Iowa lad, who the year before had come with his father and mother half-way around the world to Gwalpara, at that time an English government station at the west end of the province of Assam, India. He looked from his high perch, some three hundred feet above the Brahmaputra River, away across to the other side, about two miles, to Jogigopher, where the hermits' caves are, and yet farther, to the dark rough Bhutan hills, rising higher and higher in the distance, while far away, towering high above all, shining clear as gold in the morning sun, were the snow-

tipped Himalayas, "the abode of snow," which his father had told him were a hundred and fifty miles distant.

"I say," resumed Hal, "couldn't a fellow have a dandy time coasting down those mountains? Old Chundra Dass, the cook, says there is a tribe of men up there with ears so large they can lie down on one and cover themselves up with the other."

Hal had no chum to talk English with, and Barney understood English just as well as Assamese, his native language.

"Well, old boy," said Hal at last, "there's no use sitting here moping. Let's go down to the lake and see if we can't find some ducks or snipe."

Barney surely understood that, by the way he pranced around. Going into the house, Hal asked his mother if he might go for a little hunt before breakfast.

"Why, Hal dear, you can't get down to the lake and back before breakfast," his mother replied. "Captain Floyd is to be here this morning."

"But Barney and I want some exercise, and I have ate a big *chota hazari*" (little breakfast). "I'll ride Jim, and gallop all the way, and perhaps be back by ten o'clock, in time for breakfast and one of Captain Floyd's stories."

"All right, run along, and be careful. Now don't go too far from the main road. I'm always afraid you will wander off into the jungle back of the old river-bed, and a tiger get you."

"I'll be careful. Barney or Jim will smell any tiger before he can get us."

"Quihi! Oh, Quihi!" A tall, sedate servant quietly appeared in response to Hal's call, and was told to tell the sayce to bring Jim, if he had finished his breakfast. The horse was soon brought, ready saddled, and as eager for a run as the boy and dog. Dog and horse exchanged morning greetings, putting their noses together in a manner which showed they were the best of friends.

"Hal," said his mother, as he was ready to start, "I don't like to have you go alone so much." To the servant she said, in Assamese, "Naran, you go down the short foot-path by

the old fakir's house, and meet Hal on the main road by the big tank, and stay with him this morning."

Naran, the *chuprassi*, was of a race of fighters and hunters who for ages had been a savage and warlike people, their hand against every man, and every man's hand against them, until the civilising influence of the schools and preaching of missionaries had reached the little village perched up on the Garo hills, where Naran was born.

The same instinct that makes the savage so cruel an enemy, turned in the opposite direction, had made of this young man, who had felt the influence of kindness, a strong friend to the Carson family. For a long time he had been their most trusted servant, and had formed for Hal an attachment that amounted almost to idolatry. There was nothing within his power he would not have done for this white boy, the first and only one he had ever seen. He made his salaam to his mistress, and going to his little house in the servants' quarters, took from a corner his stout light Garo spear, which had a long, bright, elliptical-shaped head, with keen edge and point, and strong but light bamboo handle. Throwing off his light jacket, which Mrs. Carson had made for him in order that he might appear as a respectable servant, he donned his native mountain dress, which consisted of a strip of coarse cloth six inches wide and five feet long dexterously wound about his loins; then with spear in hand he ran down the hill to meet his young master.

Hal, in the meantime, had started along the main road, which wound down the hill-side below the parade-ground, past the spring, where he let Jim and Barney take a drink. Then away the three went full tilt for the lake, a mile away across the valley. Large trees skirted the road on either side, in which wild monkeys chattered and made faces at Barney as he stopped to sniff at them. Dozens of bright green parrots filled the air with discordant notes. At the tank where the village people washed themselves and their clothes Hal found the fleet-footed Naran, who greeted him with, "Salam, lora sahib," and was answered by Hal, with a laugh,—

"Why, Naran! Aren't you ashamed of yourself to come out on the road dressed in that way? You haven't got enough clothes on to dress a rag baby. You know my father doesn't allow any of you Garos to dress that way when you come down to Gwalpara to see him."

"Yes, lora sahib; but when I go hunting I must have my legs and arms free, so I can run fast. I would suffocate in the fine clothes I wear in the presence of the sahib and mem-sahib."

All the conversation between these two was carried on in the peculiar mixture of Assamese, Hindostanee, and Bengalee common at all fairs and market-places in that part of India—a mixture sure to be found in a country where are spoken one hundred and fifty different languages and dialects.

"All right; I can stand it if you can. Come on; let's go."

From the point where they stood to the lake was a little over a quarter of a mile, and led through tall thick grass or reeds, taller than Hal's head as he sat on his pony, with here and there small open plots of grass and an occasional pool of water. Hal had been down this path several times, and he let the pony take his own way through all the crooks and turns. At one place the path led along the edge of an old pit some eight feet deep, around which the path circled about half-way, then turned sharply to the right through a narrow place between two tall tamil-trees into one of the small open grass-plots.

Just as Hal's pony turned this sharp corner a short, angry snort brought him to a sudden stop, which almost threw Hal over his head. The boy immediately recovered his equilibrium, but as quickly lost his senses when he saw facing him a large wild-boar champing his teeth and foaming at the mouth.

Hal was well acquainted with hogs—big, fat, lazy Poland China and Chester whites. Many a load of corn he had thrown into the large pens on his father's Iowa farm. But a regular heathen Assamese boar he had never had the pleasure of meeting before.

He had heard of them, however. Many a story Captain

Floyd had told him of pig-sticking. One was about a brave young Englishman whose horse the year before had been killed by an under-cut from a boar that had turned on him suddenly, and his horse in falling had broken his rider's neck.

Hal knew that of all beasts that roam the fields the wild-boar of India takes the most delight in an unprovoked, stubborn fight; not in self-defence or for food, as do the tiger and leopard, but because he enjoys it.

Hal was simply frightened, and badly frightened. But before the boar had recovered from *his* surprise, Barney was facing him, and talking to him in a loud, angry voice. Like his master, he knew enough to keep out of reach of the sharp white tusks which adorned the sides of the boar's snout, and would have made ribbons of Barney's hide if they had caught him.

This side show gave Hal and Naran a "breathing-spell." Hal carried in his pocket, by Captain Floyd's advice, three or four bullets, which, with a greased patch, just fitted his muzzle-loading shot-gun. He had never had any use for these bullets, never having before met anything larger than a wild peacock. Suddenly he thought of them, and jumping from his horse, which was very restless, he quickly rammed a bullet down each barrel on top of the load already in them.

Barney kept the attention of the boar, which dared not turn away from him, for Barney would have had him by the ear with half a chance; but the best of hunting-hounds would have been no match for this "bit of pork" single-handed.

Hal waited for a chance to get a side shot, and soon the boar made another lunge at Barney, exposing the side of his face.

Hal fired quickly, but too quickly. Like a flash the boar turned directly for him. The pony, terribly frightened, jerked loose, and, tail in air, fairly flew toward home.

"Jump behind the tree, lora sahib," cried Naran in a loud voice.

On came the boar with frightful speed, his nose down,

foam and blood flying from his mouth, with Barney close behind.

Hal hugged the safe side of one tree, and Naran, behind the other, braced himself ready to drive his spear through the boar the instant he should pass. Hal dared not fire again for fear of hitting Barney.

Just as Naran was about to make the lunge, Barney, with a tremendous bound, sprang against the boar's shoulder, seized him by the neck, and the combined impetus of hog and dog was so great that it carried them both past the tree, off the narrow path, over and over "cheek by jowl" down into the pit.

Hal's anxiety for himself was now all gone. There was Barney, good old Barney, the dearest companion of a boy's heart, down in that pit with a savage boar, against which he hadn't the shadow of a chance.

"Naran! *jildy!* quick! he'll be killed," he shouted in an excited manner.

But before the words were out of his mouth the agile son of the hills had sprung to the edge of the pit, and looking down saw the boar directly below him trying to shake Barney loose.

Quick as thought the spear was turned point down, and with the handle firmly grasped in both hands, Naran jumped squarely upon the boar's back, driving the keen point with such force that it pierced through directly behind the shoulders, pinning the boar to the ground. A squeal, a quiver, and he lay dead, with Barney still chewing furiously at his ear. But Naran pulled the dog away, and they were both soon out of the pit.

Any more hunting that morning was not to be thought of. Such game seldom came in Hal's path, so ducks and such small insects were forgotten. Naran soon found some men who, like himself, were not troubled with Hindoo and Mohammedan scruples about what they touched, and they pulled the boar out of the pit, tied his feet together over a pole, and the procession started for the bungalow on the hill,

Barney leading, limping and a little the worse for wear, but with his stub tail still as erect as a drum-major's bâton.

The three hunters were royally received at the bungalow. Hal had a story of his own to tell at the breakfast table, which Captain Floyd said beat any of the pig-sticking yarns of his experience, and he added that such mighty Nimrods must come out with him some day on the elephants for a grand hunt.

That evening at dinner Hal had spareribs and sweet-potatoes, and a generous supply was sent directly from Mr. Carson's end of the table to Naran's cabin, "with the sahib's *bhot, bhot salams*" (many compliments), while Barney, although born in a Mohammedan family, stuffed himself so full of fresh pork that he could hardly bark.

THE FOOLISH FIVE.

A STORY OF MARKET SQUARE COLLEGE.

BY H. HERVEY.

THE long and short of it is we were a parcel of young idiots—I, Harry Stuart, Webb, Heath secundus, and Wade. Our ages averaged fourteen years. We were not only class fellows, but sworn chums, and, up to the time of this story, had not done anything out of the ordinary college-boy groove, good, bad, or indifferent, and had seldom if ever fallen out. But, lo you! we had lately developed what was nothing more or less than species of insanity: we had simultaneously fallen desperately in love, and all with the same girl! She was a Miss Maude Cole, the daughter of a retired Indian colonel who lived in the neighbourhood; she was about eighteen years of age, and we first met her in the gardens close to the college. These gardens were open to subscribers only; we five had tickets, and here we generally used to spend our leisure when not otherwise engaged in more important matters, such as cricket, football, etc.

Miss Cole was a handsome, dark-haired, dark-eyed girl, and the occasion of her first making an impression on our susceptible young hearts was during a butterfly-hunt in the gardens. We were all in pursuit of a magnificent "Admiral," the chase culminating in my netting him hard by a garden bench, on which a young lady—my heroine—sat reading. The others had come up, and while engaged in admiring the capture preparatory to securing it in a cork-lined box

I carried for the purpose, Miss Cole laid down her book and came to us.

We felt abashed ; we felt small, too, for she was a tall girl, and towered above us.

She asked to look at our capture, and evidently knew a great deal more about butterflies than we did, and, while deprecating the wanton destruction of such beautiful and harmless creatures, quite understood our enthusiasm in wishing to add so fine a specimen to our collections. She did not ask us to let it go in so many words, but I could see that she pitied the struggling creature, and, feeling sure she would appreciate the act, I set the captive free, and was rewarded for doing so by a sweet and gracious smile as she thanked me for my kindness and returned to her bench and her book.

We all made off, and had the outcome of our encounter with Miss Cole ended there, no harm would have accrued ; but it resulted otherwise, and, in short, we five, who had hitherto been on the best of terms, were gradually so blinded by our own folly that our relations became strained, and we looked on each other with distrust. The fact was, we were eaten up with an intense jealousy, and it was not long before the crisis came. We frequented the gardens more than ever, but not in company and comradeship : each went there impelled by his own selfish motives—in the hope of meeting Miss Cole, and enjoying the supreme privilege of doffing his mortar-board to her, if not of exchanging words.

One day I had sneaked into the gardens with this identical object in view. I had hoped to find the coast clear, for one of our former captains (called “cock” in those days), who had gained a scholarship and come into some money at the same time, was expected that afternoon to give the fellows a “tuck out” in the playground. The hampers had already arrived, and I imagined that my quondam chums—now my rivals—would “stay for the grub.”

I was employed carving my initials on a tree, keeping a look-out down the broad walk for Miss Cole’s well-known

figure, when from a side path in the shrubbery who should appear but Heath!

"Halloa!" cried he, in a tone of angry surprise, "what are you doing here?"

"I might put you the same question," I said, scowling at him as I closed my knife.

"I know! You are after Miss Cole, you sneak!"

"Sneak yourself!" I retorted. "You are after her too; you dare deny it!"

"Will you fight?"

"Fight! Yes."

"Come along to the swings, then."

The swings stood in a secluded part of the gardens; they were seldom used except during children's treats, and the locality was a well-known battle-field. We were walking along, gloomy and angry, when we happened on Stuart, who had hold of Webb by the arm, and was twisting that member, to the younger boy's no small discomfort.

"Aha! Two more of you, eh?" cried Stuart scoffingly, releasing Webb. "What do you fellows want here?—you especially, Hervey, who are always ready for eating?"

"Ask my grandmother!" was my polite response. "What are you doing here, youngster?" I continued, turning angrily on Webb.

"What's that to you?" said he; "I suppose I've just as much right to be here as you."

"What depravity," I exclaimed witheringly, "for a mere child like you! You are after Miss Cole, I bet."

"If I am, it's the same errand as the rest of you are on. Who's to prevent me?"

"Well, I do call this mean!" ejaculated Stuart emphatically. "To think you chaps could not, for once in the way, remain in the playground—especially when there's grub going—and leave the coast clear for a fellow."

"*Tu quoque!*" replied Heath, with a sneer. "I wish the whole pack of you had but one head to punch; wouldn't I just pommel it!"

"More likely you'll get yours pommelled before long," retorted Stuart. "I see what it is, you two are going to have it out, and I back Hervey."

"That remains to be seen," said Heath. "Come along."

We all four proceeded, talking loudly and angrily, quarrelling like a pack of dogs, and halting every now and then to add emphasis, as it were, to our arguments. Arrived on the ground, we were confronted by no less an individual than Wade, seated on a bench and carving his name thereon. He regarded us with an insolent smirk on his face, and asked who we were looking for.

"For you," replied Stuart, "to give a hiding to."

"Two can play at that game," rejoined Wade fiercely, walking up to us. "Who's going to give me a hiding? I'm willing to let him try."

"Look here," said Stuart, who, in reality, had the coolest head of the five, "we may as well own up to the reason that brings us here to-day. It's Miss Cole, isn't it?"

We unanimously but defiantly admitted the soft impeachment.

"Well, then, are we all against each other or not? Let us separate, and see who's for who." And as he spoke he walked away a few paces and faced round.

We imitated his example, and took up isolated positions, glaring at each other.

"I see," said Stuart, proceeding to take off his jacket, "it's to be a general scrimmage all round, and he who lasts longest to be the winner, eh? I'll say when."

We agreed. All of us by now had denuded ourselves of our jackets and were prepared to fall on. We were waiting for the word from Stuart, when the arbutus shrubs behind the bench became suddenly agitated, and Miss Cole advanced towards the angry ring.

"I am glad to be able to put a stop to this folly," she said half merrily, half severely. "Put on your jackets at once, and listen to me."

Like lambs we obeyed; we became mute, and I, for my part, felt sheepish to a degree.

"You are all very nice boys," she continued, "and I am sorry to think that I should be the cause of your fighting. I know you all like me, and I in turn like you. But at present I have not yet made my choice; so I will tell you how we shall manage it. Every day, except Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, one of you be here at half-past four to walk with me. Will that satisfy you?"

Of course we said yes, and, thanking her, we made off. The situation was not pleasant; we were angry with each other, and we had an idea that her method of settling our difficulty was more suited to children than the big chaps we considered ourselves. However, we had to abide by her decision. Schoolboy honour prevented the other four from being in the gardens on the day and at the hour sacred to the fifth; consequently there was no clashing. Gradually we began to unbend, and make friendly advances towards each other; but, at the best, it was an armed truce—we still regarded one another as rivals, and we studiously refrained from comparing notes on our individual experiences with the fair Maude.

A whole holiday happened to come on one of my days—the second or third, I think, of my turns. So infatuated was I by now, that, instead of spending my liberty rationally, I must needs devote it to the gardens. I went there immediately after breakfast, and "moonied" about, lost in dreams of the absent fair one. I determined not to go home to dinner on the bare chance of her coming earlier than I expected; but Nature will assert herself, especially when dealing with a schoolboy, and by noon I felt very hungry. I had twopence in my pocket, and I knew that Mother Kaley, the wife of the keeper, and who lived in a tiny cottage at the farther end of the grounds, kept a sort of refreshment-place, so I resolved to go there.

On a seat just outside the cottage, smoking a cigar, with a glass of Mother Kaley's gingerbeer by him, sat a young fellow of, I should say, some two or three and twenty, tall, good-looking, and well dressed. I took no notice of him, and passing on to the window, asked for two buns, which,

on being handed out, I proceeded to discuss, standing where I was.

"Rather dry, those buns, I should say," remarked the stranger. "You'd like something nicer, wouldn't you?"

"Yes," I said, smiling, for he spoke agreeably; "but I had only twopence with me, and must make the buns do."

"Surely they've something else!" he rejoined, rising and coming to the window. "I say, ma'am, what have you got besides dry-as-dust buns?"

"Here's tarts, sir," exclaimed Mother Kaley, exhibiting a plate of those comestibles, "and cheese-cakes, and caprices, all fresh to-day, sir; them buns is the only stale things I 'ave."

"Come, now," said the stranger, turning to me. "It's not so long ago since I myself wore a mortar-board, and I know you'd prefer some of these nice things. Tuck in, and I'll stand sam."

Show me the hungry schoolboy—however much he may imagine himself in love—to say nay to such an offer. I had a jolly "blow out" at the young fellow's expense, and, after duly thanking him, I went away to watch for Miss Cole. Time passed, and at length I saw her coming up the broad walk, but—in company with my late entertainer, hanging lovingly on his arm as she had never hung on mine, looking up lovingly at him as she had never looked lovingly down on me! As they approached my hiding-place I boldly stepped forth and confronted them. I doffed my mortar-board to the lady, and trembled lest her companion should let out on me in respect to the "grub." A nice thing for her to learn that I, her most devoted admirer, should indulge in vulgar "gorging" when my soul was brimming with heroic sentimentality for her!

"Holloa, youngster!" cried that idiot, on seeing me, "where did you spring from? Digested the pastry yet? Poor little chap," he concluded, addressing Miss Cole, "I found him ploughing through a couple of unnegotiable buns down at the cottage there. He confessed to only twopence, so I took pity on him and gave him a feed."

"I hope you enjoyed it," she remarked—unfeelingly I thought.

I made no reply, but assumed the place at her side with an air of proprietorship that must have been intensely ludicrous. But I was in no laughing mood; I hated the "fellow," and wanted to get rid of him.

"Send him away!" I whispered in the girl's ear, touching her surreptitiously on the hand.

All the notice she took of this was to shift to the other side of the "fellow"! I followed suit, and had hardly regained her side when *he* placed himself between us! He was laughing, but I could see he did not like my being there. Miss Cole hung on to him on the other side, and occasionally whispered to him. This maddened me, and in my blind rage I doubled my fist and hit him with all my strength on the chest!

"You ungrateful young rascal!" exclaimed the "fellow," seizing me by both arms and half shaking the life out of me. "What do you mean by that?"

"You've no right to come interfering here!" I foamed.

"Haven't I? I have a great mind to take you by the ear to the college and have you well thrashed by the first master I come across; but I'll see if you are open to reason and conviction."

"I'm not! and directly I can get away I'll fetch some of my friends, and the lot of us will thrash *you*! Let me go!"

"Listen, you young idiot!" he said, treating me to another shaking. "I am engaged to this young lady. Do you understand?"

Here was a facer!

"Is he, Miss Cole?" I asked, addressing the girl as she stood by, looking on at my discomfiture with supreme equanimity.

"Yes, he is, Harry, and I'm glad you know it, for you will be able to tell the others, and mind you do!"

I saw it was all up. My anger oozed out at my fingers' ends; despair took possession of my soul; I gave in. After

promising to go away quietly, the "fellow" released his hold, and I left the spot a sadder if not a wiser boy.

The next day I imparted the intelligence to the other four, who equally realised the futility of further aspirations. A common suffering drew us together again. We all shook hands and renewed vows of everlasting friendship. But though we thus surrendered our hitherto cherished hopes of preferment by Miss Cole, and tacitly consigned her memory to oblivion, we were in no mind to let the Lothario who had supplanted us go free. Many were the schemes of revenge we formulated. One spoke of waylaying and setting on him in a bunch; another suggested pouring our tale of woe into the ears of one of our big chaps, and persuading him into challenging the "fellow," and giving him a thrashing for the honour of the college, and so forth. But they all fell through, and we finally agreed to await our opportunity. Thenceforth we shunned those blessed gardens, and never set eyes again on either Miss Cole or the "fellow" till our day of revenge came. We had no idea who the "fellow" was, and cared less; all we wanted to do was to "score off" him—and score off him we did, with a vengeance.

Now I acknowledge I was a foolish boy, a very foolish boy in many things; but I was no fool at cricket. I had steadily risen through the fifth, fourth, and third elevens into the second, and this season I was to captain them. My four chums were in the third, but owing to two second-eleven fellows—the brothers Donaldson—having been called away home, Stuart and Heath took their places. Our first match of the season was against the second eleven of the Abbey College, with one master on either side. It was rather a grand affair, and we played to a large gallery in the Victoria Park. Our tent stood on one side of the ground, that of our opponents on the other, while at right angles to both were the marquees for spectators. The sisters, cousins, and aunts of the rival college boys mustered strong, and we anticipated an exciting time of it. I won the toss, and we elected to send them in. We sallied forth, and while I was placing my men in the field, who should

I see, seated well forward in one of the public tents, but Miss Cole, and lounging at her feet, the "fellow"!

During the wait for the batsmen to come in, I pointed the "fellow" out to the umpire, and asked who he was.

"Oh, he's Mr. Granger, our new junior mathematical tutor," replied the boy. "He'll come in first wicket down."

Here was my chance! Donaldson primus and secundus being my point and short slip respectively, I gave those places to my chums Heath and Stuart, revealing to those aggrieved youths the "fellow's" identity, and wishing that one or other of us should achieve his downfall. "I'm going to bowl slow twisters, so look out, both of you," was my parting injunction.

The match began. We got rid of first wicket without much trouble, he being cleverly stumped. A general clapping of hands from the Abbey tent now heralded the advent of the "fellow." He gave me a nod of recognition as he passed me, to which I responded by doffing my cap, for I now knew him to be a master, though of a rival college. He batted well, and played havoc with the bowling of our master, Mr. Brunswick, who trundled from the other end. Over. It was my turn, and the "fellow" faced me. He cut my first ball to the boundary for four, the performance eliciting great acclamation, and I could see Miss Cole clapping enthusiastically. Determined to get him out, I set my teeth and bowled. The ball literally crept through the air to his wicket. Out he stepped, intending to smack it again into the country. But I had given it a heavy twist; it broke, and bang went his off stump! A dismayed silence in the Abbey tent and uproarious applause from all our faction, in which "Bravo, Hervey!" "Slows for ever!" were dominant, made it a proud moment for me. Revenge is very sweet. I had gained it, not by questionable or vindictive means, but in fair, honest sport, and I was happy.

When I tell you that we put them all out for under a century; when I tell you that I went in first, got my eye well in, knocked the "fellow's" bowling about all over the field; when I tell you that I carried my bat for something

like seventy runs—I forget the exact figure—and that we beat them hollow ; when I tell you that the “fellow” heaped coals of fire on my head by shaking me by the hand in front of Miss Cole and the rest of the world, complimenting me on my prowess ;—you will understand my taking him aside and apologising for my fatuous conduct on that shameful day in the gardens, and how glad I was that things had turned out as they did.

PHIL'S BURGLAR.

BY FRANK H. CONVERSE.

I AM Phil Morris, fourteen years old, and the youngest clerk in Covert Savings-Bank. The cashier is my Uncle Jack, and he began at the bottom, where I am, when *he* was a boy. He says that a boy had better grow up with a country bank than go West and grow up with the country. He thinks there's more money in it.

"If there's anything in you," he said one day, "you'll work your way up to be bank president some time." And I guess it's better to be president of a country bank than to be President of the United States. Anyway, you wouldn't have to be shot before folks began to find out that you were doing your level best to keep things straight. Uncle Jack says and does such queer things sometimes that people say he's odd. They tell about his being so wrapped up in our bank that he never had time to hunt up a wife. I notice, though, that when father and mother died, and left me, a wee little baby, Uncle Jack found time to bring me up, and give me a good education to boot. Oh, he's as good as gold or government bonds, Uncle Jack is.

We live in rooms over the bank, where old Mrs. Halstead keeps house for us. Underneath, we do the business. There's heaps of money in our two big vaults. Last summer—and, mind you, this was while *I* was away on vacation—two men broke into the building. They came upstairs, and into Uncle Jack's room. One had a bull's-eye lantern that he flashed in Uncle Jack's face as he sat up in bed, and the other pointed a big pistol right at his head.

"Tell us where the vault keys are, or I'll shoot you," he said.

"Oh, Uncle Jack," I broke in, when he was telling me about it, "what *did* you do?"

"What would you have done?" he asked, in his odd way.

"I know what I *wouldn't* have done," I answered him, straightening up a bit—"I wouldn't have given 'em the keys."

"Ah!" Uncle Jack says, kind of half-doubtful, and then went on. "Well, I told them to shoot away. And they knew as well as I did that shooting wouldn't bring them the keys. So when they found they couldn't frighten me, the scoundrels tied me, and went off in a rage, with my watch and pocket-book."

That was last summer. One night in the autumn Uncle Jack started off down town. "It's Lodge night, and I may not be back until late," he said. "You won't mind staying alone—a great boy like you." And of course I said "No."

But somehow, after Mrs. Halstead went to bed, I found I *did* mind it. I don't know what made me feel so fidgety. Perhaps it was reading about a bank robbery in Bolton, which is the next town to Covert. It was thought to be the work of Slippery Jim, a notorious burglar. And while I was thinking about it, I dozed off in Uncle Jack's easy-chair.

"Ow-w-w!" I sung out all at once. And if you'd woke up of a sudden to see a rough-looking man, with a slouch hat pulled over his eyes, standing right in front of you, you'd have done the same. "What—what do you want here?" I sort of gasped; and I tried to speak so he wouldn't hear my teeth knock together.

"The vault keys—where are they?" he answers, short and gruff. And then he kind of motioned with his hand—I suppose to show the revolver he was holding.

I was pretty badly scared; but all the same, I didn't

mean he should have those vault keys, if he shot the top of my head off.

"Come, hurry up," he said, with a sort of grin. And I noticed then that he had red whiskers, and some of his upper front teeth were gone, so that he didn't speak his words plain.

"I should know you anywhere," I thought. "Strategy, Phil Morris," I said to myself, bracing up inside; for a story I'd read about, how a lady caught a live burglar, came across me like a flash. "Please don't shoot, sir," I began to say, with all sorts of demi-semiquavers in my voice—"please don't; indeed, I'll show you where they're kept." So making believe to shake all over, I took the lamp, and led the way into Uncle Jack's bedroom. "The k-k-k-eyes are in th-there, sir," I told him.

You should have seen how my fingers trembled when I pointed to the little storeroom that opened out of the chamber. The keys were there, true enough, but I'd like to see any one except Uncle Jack or I find them. I suppose you have heard of such things as secret panels.

The storeroom floor is lower than the chamber floor. Many a time, when I haven't been thinking, I've stepped down with a jar that almost sent my backbone up through the top of my head.

"In there, eh?" said my bold burglar, quite cheerful like, and pushed by me to the open door.

I set the lamp down, and my heart began to beat so that I was almost afraid he could hear it. "Now or never," I whispered.

It was all done quicker than you could say "knife." I put my head down like a billy-goat, and ran for the small of his back. "Butted" isn't a nice word, but that's just how I sent him flying headlong into the closet. I heard him go down with a crash that shook Mrs. Halstead's biggest jar of raspberry jam off the shelf.

I didn't stop to take breath until I'd locked the door and barricaded it with Uncle Jack's big mahogany bureau—just

as the lady did in the story. Then I breathed and listened. What I heard made my eyes stick out a bit. First I almost felt like crying. Then I laughed until I did cry. I suppose the excitement made me hystericky. It wasn't ten minutes before I roused up Mr. Simms the constable, and Jared Peters, who lives next door. Mr. Simms brought along an old pepperbox revolver and a pair of handcuffs. Jared Peters had his double-barrel gun, but in his flurry he forgot to load it.

Upstairs we hurried. The two men pulled away the bureau, and Mr. Simms, who was in the army stationed us in our places.

"Look a-here, you feller," Mr. Simms called out, "the strong arm of the law is a-coverin' of you with deadly weapons. Surrender without resistance,—Phil, yank open the door."

I flung open the door. Jared Peters covered the prisoner with his gun. He was covered with something else too—Mrs. Halstead's raspberry jam, that he'd been wallowing in. ~~He~~ He didn't look proud, though, for all he was so stuck up.

Before he could open his mouth Mr. Simms had him handcuffed and dragged out into the chamber.

"There," he said, with a long breath, "I guess *you* won't burgle no more right away."

"For goodness' sake, Simms—Peters—don't you know me—Mr. John Morris, cashier of the savings-bank?" That was what the prisoner said just as soon as he could speak.

Well, I didn't wait any longer. I just bolted for my own room, where I could lie down on the floor. And there I lay laughing until I was purple clear round to my shoulder-blades. Then I went to bed.

"Philip," said Uncle Jack solemnly, while we were at breakfast next morning, "I should beg your pardon for trying to test your courage in the—the consummately idiotic way I took to do it last night, but"—and he looked pretty sheepish—"I—I think I got the worst of it."

"I think you did, sir," I answered him, choking a bit.

"The disguise was a good one, though," he went on, with a sort of feeble chuckle, "and leaving my false teeth out changed my voice completely—ch, Phil?"

"Yes, sir—until you hollered out in the closet that it was all a joke, and wanted me to let you out," I answered him, as I got up and edged toward the door.

"Why didn't you let me out then?" roared Uncle Jack, who is rather quick-tempered.

I hope I wasn't impudent. Truly, I didn't intend to be. "Because, Uncle Jack," I said, as I turned the door knob, "I have heard you say more than once that he who cannot take a joke should not make one." And as I dodged through the door I heard Uncle Jack groan.

THE GHOST OF THE BALL AND WICKET.

BY ALICE F. JACKSON.

THE ghost of the Ball and Wicket had begun to walk again. Harrison had seen it, and Harrison was not afflicted with nerves.

Indeed, the admission had been dragged from him, for Harrison was really a bit ashamed to own up to having seen a ghost. He was a matter-of-fact, bluff old coastguardsman, and had been taken unawares, and pumped until the whole affair had been pumped out of him.

"Had it a bandage bound about its brows?"

Yes. Harrison admitted that it had.

"And a bloody gash across one hollow cheek?"

"It had," said the old chap reluctantly.

"And a lean arm pointing upwards?"

Yes. He confessed to that. So the ghost's identity was established beyond a doubt.

It had been laid for years. Even housemaids hadn't seen it for the last ten. And if a ghost is walking about the place, housemaids, you may be sure, will be the first to see it. It had haunted the Ball and Wicket for almost a hundred years, and aged grandmothers of Riversmouth still spoke of it with bated breath.

It, or he—when it was a man—had been murdered, foully murdered, so the story went—at the old inn, which stood in those days close to the desolate shore. Of course it is standing in the same spot now, only the shore is not so lonely as it was then. It is one of the oldest houses in the town; and once upon a time it stood alone with no other building

in sight. There was no sea-wall in those days; nothing but a great sandy common over which the sea rolled during the high tides; and the people living there (dead now long ago) grew used to the stillness when the tide was out, and to the roaring of the sea when the waves came back and broke upon the lonely shore.

"Capital place for smugglers, I should think?"

"Smugglers? True for you, me boys." And old Rafferty, sticking his pipe in the corner of his mouth, would tell us how they slouched in at that thick worm-eaten door to tell their comrades within of their safe run from France and the concealed casks of brandy waiting now to be hauled in safety to the inn.

Wreckers also made a fine living on our coast, he told us; also that they carried their booty, torn often from the drowned bodies of their victims, through that same worm-eaten door, and then sat drinking with their companions inside, planning other wrecks as they listened to the storms.

But that is all changed now, and we live in better days. Smugglers haven't such a profitable time, and wreckers are monsters of the past.

The old inn stands. If it had a voice, what a history it might tell! But it has no voice, and now it is so uncared for that it is gradually tumbling to pieces. No one has rented it for twenty years at least. The last innkeeper was driven from it by the ghost.

Nobody knew his name—the name of the ghost, I mean; or the name, rather, of the murdered man whose spirit haunted the place. He was a traveller, that was all they knew, who had put up at the Ball and Wicket one stormy fatal night; and he had in his possession jewels and other valuable things; and the innkeeper, in collusion with a notorious smuggler, had knifed him, so they said.

"Swing for it? Yes, they swung for it," said Rafferty. "Both of 'em. And the inn was took by a chap of the name of Jenkins, although he knew that the traveller's ghost

came back to visit the place. He was a young chap then ; he was an old chap when I come to know him."

"And had he seen the ghost?"

"Seen it ! Seen it once too often, me boys ! He went off his nut. He was a silly old soft when I knowed him, and he was for ever babbling about the ghost. They say it came to the inn on that same night of every year, and sometimes it hung about the place for mor'n a week at a time. Fust day of August, that's the anniversary of the murder ; and many folks, besides old Jenkins, have seen it on that night."

"And you, Rafferty, have *you* ever seen the ghost ?"

"Me ? No, me boys. I never seen it meself, though every landlord of the Ball and Wicket have been wisited by that happarition. They say it's got a bandage wound about its forehead, an' a bloody gasht right acrost its cheek, and that it walks with one hand lifted up, always pointing upwards. But it haven't appeared to nobody these fifteen good years or more ; and now—well, they do say it's begun to walk again. Mrs. Tomlins came screeching home last week and said she'd seen the ghost ; and Tommy Tucker and his sister Ann declare to it. And now Harrison—he, he, he ! they do say Harrison confessed to seeing it too."

"I don't believe in ghosts," said Rolf, as we left him and walked away.

"And yet it's queer," I said. "Those people must have seen *something*, I suppose. There's Harrison, too—Harrison's as honest a chap as daylight, anyway. And—Rolf ! Great Scott ! To day's the *first of August* !"

"Why, so it is, by Jove ! And the anniversary of the night of the murder !"

We had come home for the holidays just a week ago to hear the stale old story of that ghost crop up again. We had heard it since our babyhood, Rolf and I. I remember a nursemaid frightening me into fits about it when I was a little kid, but of late years the ghostly legend had died a natural death.

"I don't believe in ghosts," said Rolf again.

"At any rate, to-night's the first of August."

"What say? Shall we prowling around the Ball and Wicket for a lark?"

"To-night? At midnight, do you mean?" I asked.

"When churchyards yawn and graves give up their dead."

"Ugh, Rolf! It sounds beastly eerie, anyway."

"Funk it?" demanded Rolf.

"Funk it? Well—I don't believe in ghosts. I really don't believe that a dead man's spirit walks about the earth. I suppose. . . . I should think somebody's ~~shamming~~ the ghost. . . . Eh?"

"You may bet your bottom dollar somebody is! And I thought if anybody was going to sham the ghost to-night, we might have a shot at taking a rise out of him ourselves."

"But how do you propose to go about it?" I asked.

"Prowl around, of course, and chase him with a stick,—that's if he'll condescend to favour us with a sight of his ghostly countenance."

"If he's a proper ghost, the stick would fall on empty air, I s'pose."

"So much the better for his ghostly bones."

Rolf's a never-may-care sort of chap about such things. He funks at nothing; and risk or danger only gives more zest to him. 'Then, too, he's got a way of carrying a fellow along with him. 'The next minute I was listening to his plan. And real ghost or sham ghost—whichever the bogey of the Ball and Wicket might prove to be—I knew I should be prowling round the lone old inn that night in search of him.

* * * * *

We provided ourselves with sticks, a candle each, and a brace of match-boxes. We were early people, and the lights were out soon after ten o'clock, and, armed as above, we sneaked out softly through the scullery door and made our way as fast as possible in the direction of the Ball and Wicket.

There it stood—a ghostly-looking place itself, with the moonlight shining through the broken panes of glass. It was

nearly full moon that night, and the old inn cast its shadow on a piece of broken wall that once enclosed it.

For this dark spot we made, and, standing in the shadow by the wall, we paused to look about. Over the wall we could see the upper windows of the inn; the window of the room, too, where the murder had been committed, and at that window, you may be sure, both of us stared pretty hard.

How still it was! We heard no sound. Nothing but our own hurried breathing and the murmur of the tide coming in.

About three hundred yards away a timber-yard had lately been erected, and in the day-time it was full of busy workmen. Facing us was a zinc-roofed open shed, where the workmen who came from any distance generally ate their dinner. The shadow of the timber-yard fell on the other side, and the moonlight was shining full into the open shed.

"Clang! clang! clang!" broke out from the old church clock. We counted eleven strokes, and wondered that the time was going so awfully slow. The murder, we knew, had been committed in the dead of night, but the people who had come across the ghost, had seen it more than once soon after twilight.

"A sham ghost," whispered Rolf, "would want some fun for his shamming, and if he did not show himself at dusk, he'd find no people to scare at midnight in a lonely place like this. Perhaps if we—— What's that!"

Up went my eyes to the window. I saw nothing there.

"There!" whispered Rolf, giving me a desperate nudge. And I followed his pointed hand directed across the common.

"Where? I don't—— A-ah!" I saw it now—a tall white thing distinct in the moonlight, standing on one of the grassy mounds dotted all over the common. Now it seemed to crouch, and now it was up again, and now it disappeared in the hollow near the mound.

"Did you see it?" whispered Rolf.

"I saw something white," I said, and threw a backward, hasty glance at the window we'd been watching. Nothing *there*.

"Look! look!" said Rolf.

And there it was again—stooping, groping, hunting for something, so it seemed, about the mound. And now it stood up straight again, and it was lean and long, and we remembered with a queer strange thrill that the traveller had been a tall, thin man, they said.

It came across the common towards us, stooping, groping still; it seemed to leave the place reluctantly, for it often looked behind.

"Funky?" whispered Rolf.

"N—no."

"Kneel down. Keep close to the wall. It can't see us in the shadow."

"D'you think *that's* the ghost?"

"I don't know. Let's watch it for a bit. What the dickens is it looking for?"

For it was stooping again and groping still. But soon it grew weary of the search, and, lifting its tall white form, pointed, as it seemed, an accusing hand to heaven, and slowly, noiselessly made its way in our direction.

"W-w-what are you going to do?" I found myself stuttering. And I will say that the feel of Rolf's arm was the only thing that kept me there.

"Watch its antics for the present."

It came gliding on—nearer, nearer still, and now the moonlight shone upon its head, and I saw a bandage wound about its ghostly brows.

White? Well, I expect if we could have seen our own faces at that moment, they could not have been whiter than the spectre's.

Slowly, almost painfully it glided on, passed us kneeling in the shadow of the wall, paused, it might be, barely fifteen feet away, and raised its hollow eyes up to *that* window with a deep-drawn sigh. And there was a streak of blood across its pallid cheek.

We could have flung our sticks at it and never missed; we could have leaped upon it and seized it in a trice; we could

have trounced it as well as we had meant to do ; and we did nothing.

The sigh we heard was like a human sigh—the sigh of one utterly dejected, hopeless, and as if it suffered pain ; and we watched it go, with its accusing hand raised up to Heaven, straight on into the open zinc-roofed shed where the workmen at the timber-yard crowded to eat their dinner.

“ I couldn’t have struck the thing,” Rolf whispered afterwards. “ Did you see its face ? ”

I only nodded, for I felt inclined to cry. A face so ghastly, so wretched, or so utterly miserable it would have seemed impossible to see.

“ Look ! look ! ”

And there it was again, stooping, groping in the open shed, looking for something again.

“ What can he be looking for ? I bar this sort of thing, Rolf,” I urged, nudging him. “ Shall we cut and run ? ”

But he shook his head. And he wouldn’t let me hook it on my own account. He wanted to find out what the spectre was.

“ It walks so feebly, we can follow it anywhere,” he said. “ Look ! look ! See, it is coming back ! ”

And so it was—back towards the inn. It passed on the other side of the wall, and we were obliged to stand to keep the thing in sight. So close it came we could almost have touched it with our sticks.

What prompted Rolf he never knew, nor I.

“ Who are you ? ” he demanded suddenly. “ And why do you prowl round in this ghostly way ? ”

It stopped as if it had been shot. The accusing hand fell limp. We heard it gasp. And the sunken eyes fell on our two heads peeping at it over the wall. Then with a hollow cry the spectre fled and made for the door of the inn.

“ Follow, follow ! ” shouted Rolf, and we were round the wall in a trice. We reached the doorway just as the white thing bolted through. Its aim was to have shut us out, but Rolf was too quick for that,

"Back! Back!" it cried, and flung up its lean arms.
"Back!"

"Back yourself!" shouted Rolf. And threatened it with his stick.

"Spare me!" cried the spectral thing, and fell with a thud on the floor.

We whipped out our candles. Rolf struck a match and lighted both, and, holding them aloft, we stooped over our captured ghost.

We saw a gaunt skeleton of a man dressed in a nightshirt, and his legs were encased in a pair of white stockings, too. The sunken eyes were fixed on us pleadingly; he drew his breath hard; and one hand clutched a crust of bread.

"I'm starving," he muttered feebly. "Spare me. I am starving. I'm a dying man."

"Who are you?" asked Rolf. "Tell me who you are. We won't hurt you," and he gently pushed the bandage off his pallid brows.

He muttered something which he couldn't catch.

"Who?"

"Jefferson—Jim Jefferson—the runaway convict. Well," with a desperate grin, "I'm dying now."

Great Scott! the thing was as clear as a pikestaff! Jefferson had escaped from Dartmoor more than a month ago, and had never been caught. And he had been hiding here. He was a Riversmouth man, a clerk or something, and had been taken up for forgery, and condemned three years ago.

"Poor chap!" said Rolf. "Poor fellow! What were you looking for on the common and in the workmen's shed?"

"This," and putting his lean hand up to his mouth he gnawed at the crust of bread. "The workmen eat their dinner there—waste some of it," he muttered. "Picnic-party—on the common to-day—I went to look for—food."

His eyes closed. A shiver ran through his body. And Rolf looked funky for the first time that night.

"Jeff—Jefferson! Don't you want to see anybody? Oh,

good heavens ! I think he's dying ! " cried Rolf. " Bob, I say, we ought to fetch somebody—Jefferson ! "

" Uncle Atherton would come," I said. " I'll fetch him if you like."

" My Uncle Atherton's a clergyman," cried Rolf, " a parson—a right good sort——"

The dying convict opened his eyes and faintly nodded his head.

" Run ! " cried Rolf. " I'll stay with him, Bob. I can. And—— Yes, I will."

And say what you like about capturing the ghost, *that* was the pluckiest thing he did.

Well, to make a long story short, I found Uncle Atherton and dragged him off with me in a jiffy to the inn—not empty-handed, either, for we carried back a can of soup and a bottle of old port-wine. And there we left him, for he packed us off, he wouldn't let either of us stay.

Poor Jefferson died that night, or rather in the early hours the next morning, and made a clean breast of that month's misery.

He had lived on turnips, taken from the fields, and had sometimes milked a cow when he got a chance ; and, hiding always by day and travelling only by night, he had gradually worked his way back to Riversmouth, where he found a capital hiding-place in the old haunted inn.

He knew the ghostly legend well, and succeeded one night in stealing a nightshirt and a pair of stockings from a clothes-line where they'd been left hanging up to dry ; and, dressed in these, he had played the ghost in the hope of scaring curious persons from prying too near the inn, and had stolen cautiously out at night to forage, poor chap, for food.

Now and again he managed to get something out of a larder window, but oftener he returned hungry with little or nothing to the inn.

But rather than give himself up to the authorities to be sent back to Dartmoor prison, Jim Jefferson, the forger and convict, just starved himself to death.

As for the ghost of the Ball and Wicket, nobody has ever set eyes upon it since.

STUBBY'S CHANCE.

BY FLORA HAINES LOUGHEAD.

STUBBY SULLIVAN stole through the thick field of mustard lining the road, his eyes and ears alert. He wore a coarse straw hat, a dark flannel shirt, and a pair of trousers whose lengthwise stripes were almost effaced by the dirt with which they were encrusted. From time to time he looked down upon these garments with a feeling of pride. He had not misspent the half-hour that he had lain concealed in a pit of brick-clay, ~~conspicuously~~ rubbing the moist earth into the coarse threads of the fabric.

In his heart there was deep pride and a sense of triumph. The twelve-year-old boy had accomplished a feat that many desperate men had attempted, and few had ever succeeded in doing; for he had eluded the notice of the officers, and escaped the cordon of guards surrounding San Quentin prison.

He was happy as a bird that has escaped from its cage after a year's captivity. He began to whistle, but checked himself. The world stretched before him, broad and beautiful. The yellow field of mustard was like a shimmering sea of gold. The low hum of the bees was music. A rabbit, startled by his step, stopped an instant in the road to look at him with bright, curious eyes, and ears erect, and then darted away. The stone the boy would have flung at it dropped from his hand, for was he not in sympathy with all free wild creatures? His plans for the future were vague and irresponsible as theirs. A few miles more and he would be safely entrenched in the chaparral of the foot-hills, where he could snap his fingers at his pursuers, and wander at will through the beautiful wooded

cañons, or steal down to hidden coves where the sea laved stretches of solitary beach flanked by high bluffs.

Stubby knew how to shift for himself. A dead father, a drunken mother—these were the sum of the advantages nature had bestowed upon him. Dwelling on the mud-flats that skirt San Leandro Creek, on the Oakland side of San Francisco Bay, he had learned to dig clams and hunt mussels, and to cast a line with the cunning of an old angler; and in the garden at San Quentin he had seen the prisoners set cunningly devised traps for gophers and squirrels—traps that, built on a larger scale, might do for mountain lions, or even grizzlies. Large ambitions and splendid expectations were in the head of this embryo hermit and trapper.

"Hello!" cried a voice, over the top of the tall mustard.

Stubby had run, unawares, full upon a low outlying farmhouse that he had often seen from the upper windows of the prison. It was a boy's voice that hailed him; he could dimly see the outlines of a carriage and a pair of grey horses standing in the door-yard.

"Hello, I say!" cried the voice, this time imperative.

Stubby was quick to think and act in a matter that so vitally concerned his own welfare. If he should disregard the call, suspicion might be aroused, on account of the nearness of the prison, and a hue and cry be raised, which would be sure to result in his capture. But if he acted as any other boy would under such circumstances, little attention would be paid to him, and he might go his way undisturbed.

He left the tall weeds and walked boldly up to the carriage. The horses were chained to a post, but a boy sat on the front seat, holding the reins—a pale, delicate boy, with large brown eyes that looked straight before him with a melancholy expression.

"Who are you?" asked the boy, looking off over Stubby's head.

"I'm a ranch hand," said Stubby. "Who are you?"

"I'm nothing in particular," returned the boy sadly.

"We drove up from San Rafael this morning. My father

left me here with the driver. He had to go over to San Quentin."

Stubby was beginning to understand. He had been scowling at the fine clothes and handsome carriage with the instinctive jealousy of the homeless unfortunate. This was the son of the newly elected Governor, who was paying his first visit to the prison. It was through the unwonted stir caused by his unexpected arrival that the boy convict had been able to get away. The scowl in his face deepened. Like all of his class, it was part of Stubby's theory of life to hate any one remotely allied to the law and its officers. He would have liked to strike the boy and then run away.

"How large are you, and what do you look like?" persevered the strange lad.

"See for yourself," replied Stubby shortly.

"I can't see. I'm blind."

"You lie! You've got your eyes wide open. I see 'em," said Stubby sharply.

"I've never seen a thing in my life. I live in darkness all the time," said the boy gravely. "I don't know how the sky looks, or the grass, or trees, or flowers. I've never seen my dear father or mother. I only know my friends from each other by touching their faces with my hands."

He turned his full lustrous eyes on the other as he spoke, and there was something in their mournful vacant expression that made Stubby shiver, while his own eyes became unaccountably moist.

"I wish you'd get up on the seat here beside me, and let me see how you look."

The blind lad made his plea so meekly that something swelled in Stubby's throat. He put his foot on the step and sprang into the carriage. The boy placed the reins in his hands, and groped for his face with slender sensitive fingers. The driver, lounging at a short distance, seeing a coarsely clad boy, evidently the farmer's son, climb into the carriage and take the reins, and the horses standing quietly, felt relieved as to his charge, and strolled out of sight around the house. The

boy passed his fingers doubtfully over Stubby's square jaw and chin, touched his freckled pug nose and round cheeks, lingered around the eyes—frank blue eyes—well set beneath regular and shapely brows, and touched his bristling light hair, concluding his exploration with a smile of good-comradeship.

"You're a nice boy," he said, with decision. "Wouldn't you make a jolly playfellow, though!"

Stubby tried to murmur a reply, but the words stuck in his throat.

"I never have anybody to play with me," said the blind boy. "It was awfully lonely here till you came. I don't see why my father wouldn't let me go along with him. Have you ever been there?"

"Once," replied Stubby. He understood only too well why the Governor would not take his afflicted child, with his sensitive hearing, into the neighbourhood of brutal criminals, whose every other word was a curse.

"And have you ever seen a murderer?" asked the boy, turning his large eyes again upon his more experienced companion with the same vacant appeal.

"I expect so. There's a pile of 'em over there."

How would the innocent young fellow feel could he know that this new-found friend had messed with murderers every day of his life for a year, and slept with one at night?

"How do they look?" inquired the boy eagerly.

"They looks and acts just like other people. Some of 'em are a heap better an' kinder."

Stubby was thinking of his own cellmate, a man who had killed another in a drunken frenzy, a man whose head had grown white within prison walls, and who was the only one in the world Stubby was really sure had ever cared for him. It was he who had planned the boy's escape, because he was sure there was good in him, and could not bear to see him grow up in the vile atmosphere of the prison.

"Give him half a chance, and he'll make a man worth lookin' at some day," he had often said.

So much had he talked about the boy's capacity, if ever

this blessed chance should come to him, that Stubby himself had been awakened into an interest in his own future, and together they had watched and waited for the opportunity that was to bring his release and set him on a new path. He thought of old Silas, now anxious and watchful, screening his disappearance with some adroit excuse, and he wondered how the old man would feel if, after all, he were to be brought back. A savage unrest took possession of him, and a wild purpose formed in his mind. He looked towards the house. The driver was still out of sight. He looked at the sleek grey roadsters attached to the carriage. It was not likely that the farm stables held a pair that could overtake them on the open road. A thought, half terrible, half grotesque, came to him. He had got into all his troubles through running off with one pair of horses; it would be curious if he should find relief by running off with another pair.

"Do you like to ride?" he said to the blind boy.

"Better than anything else. You see, I can't run about like other boys. It's the only way I can go fast—fast like a bird through the air."

"You want me to give you a tearin' big ride—the biggest and fastest you ever had?"

"Can you drive? But Julius wouldn't like it. He'd make a dreadful fuss," objected the lad.

"Who cares for Julius? I'm a daisy driver, I am. You keep mum, and we'll just go a-kitin', you bet!"

Stubby sprang out of the carriage, unfastened the steel chain that held the leader, and was back on the seat in another instant.

Before them was an open gate and a level road stretching far away to the south. The region was sparsely settled. By avoiding villages and following the turns seaward they would soon reach the lightly travelled road that ran along the coast.

At the touch of the whip the strong grey horses gave a bound and dashed through the gateway and down the road. The blind boy caught at his companion's arm in fear.

"Oh, stop ; please stop !" he said. "My father will be angry. I don't want to go off this way."

"You quit ! Let go o' me !" said Stubby. "You shut up, unless you want the horses to kill me an' you both."

The boy sat still, resentful and frightened. Stubby no longer cared for him or his helplessness. All his thought was of himself and the manner in which he would now escape his pursuers. He seemed to hear cries down the road at his back and wanted to shout a mad defiance. All the world was down on him, but he would yet outwit it. By-and-by, when he was away out of sight and hearing up on the bluffs he would jump from the carriage and run for a hiding-place. But rather than be taken, he would drive the team over the bluffs into the sea. In his own extremity he did not think of what the shock of such an experience might produce upon the innocent boy by his side, or the risks to which he was exposing him. He had no scruples about the splendid animals that, with flying manes and foaming mouths, were bearing him on to freedom. He was a little warrior hewing his way to liberty.

They were nearing a depot on the North Coast Railway, an isolated station on a barren piece of land. People were standing on the platform, laden with bundles and wraps. He must get quickly by, or some one might observe them and try to stop them.

There was a puff of white smoke around the curve of the road. Stubby saw it, and lashed the team, in order to cross the track in advance of the train. The greys saw it, and gave one mad plunge ahead, then stopped and reared at the scream of the whistle. The blind boy heard the rumble of the wheels and the engine's hoarse warning, and gave a piteous cry.

"The train is coming. We shall be run over. Oh, father !"

They were on the edge of the track, the horses still rearing and plunging and refusing to go on. The train, slackening down as it approached the station, was still coming at a terrific speed less than fifty yards away. Stubby saw his

chance. The bank above the road was soft and weedy. He could jump like a cat, and they would be slow to miss or search for him in the excitement. But the blind boy's hand was on his arm ; his plaintive cry was in his ear. He looked at the frail lad, and thought of him mangled and bleeding, under the car wheels. Then he set his teeth together with a man's purpose. He thrust the reins into the boy's hands.

"Hold them tight. Pull hard. Don't let go for an instant," he said.

Those who were watching saw him leap over the dashboard and step out on the shafts. He swung himself down, gripping the bridle of the leader, throwing himself directly in front of the maddened animals, while the great iron monster, puffing and screaming, thundered down the track.

When Stubby opened his eyes he was lying on the depot platform. There was a queer, numb feeling about his head, and both arms seemed to be pinned to his side. He could see the big greys, champing and fretting, but unharmed, standing near, with a couple of men at their heads. The carriage was empty. His eyes came back to those around him, and he realised that a very small, nervous hand, with a familiar touch, was resting on his forehead.

"Is he awake yet, father?" asked the blind boy.

The tall man in black looked very grave as he replied. Stubby knew the face ; he had caught a glimpse of it at the prison that morning, and knew him for the Chief Executive of the State. He addressed Stubby, speaking with a gentleness and courtesy that were new to the little outcast.

"Who are you, and what is your name, my boy?"

A man in the crowd, one of the prison officials, answered for him.

"It's only Stubby Sullivan, your Honour. You'll find his name on our records, sir. He's serving a seven-year term for horse-stealing. Looks like he's been up to his old tricks again."

"Do you mean to say that this child is a convict?"

The Governor's voice shook. His eyes were blazing fire

Stubby interpreted the situation in his own way. It was the same old thing. The whole world was down on him, as it always had been. He tried to clinch his small fists ; he looked anger and hatred at them all.

"You're all agin me. My last chance is gone," he screamed shrilly.

The Governor stooped beside the injured boy, so that his words might reach him and him alone.

"Stubby," he said, slowly and impressively, "you've had your chance, and—you—took—it—nobly."

The anger died out of the boy's eyes as he met the Governor's gentle look. He searched the faces of those about him. For the first time in his life he beheld kind looks and warm approval on every hand. The homely freckled face was transfigured with the look of happiness that dawned upon it, but his eyes still searched the face of the Chief Executive with unspoken longing.

"There are many more chances for you," continued the Governor, and his dignified look, which swept the crowd, including the prison officer who had spoken so slightly of the boy, seemed to challenge question.

"The boy who will meet his duty bravely in the face of temptation and danger is deserving of everybody's trust, and I for one shall not withhold it. I only hope other convicts I may set free will do as well as this boy, who shall never again set foot within the prison."

Stubby shut his eyes very tight. He was not going to let all of those strange people see the tears that shame and pain and hunger, and all the ills he had suffered, could never wring from him.

JACK, DITTO, AND LIKEWISE.

BY JOHN KENDRICK BANGS.

IT was at Zurich that Jack, Jack, and Jack were spending their vacation. Not Zurich, Switzerland, but a little imitation American Zurich that served the purpose of these three lively boys quite as well as if not better than the Swiss Zurich could possibly have done. The fact that Zurich, New York, was the proud possessor of a lake, two hotels, and a prosperous pulp-mill, now run by steam and not by water as it had been in days of yore, contributed much to the pride of those who were compelled by force of circumstances to dwell there all the year round. From these they derived their bread and butter. The lake made the hotels possible; the hotels brought them money in summer; the pulp-mill brought them money in winter.

To the three Jacks, best known to their friends and neighbours by the names they had given themselves—Jack, Ditto, and Likewise—there was no place in the world that was more beautiful and fuller of opportunity for fun than Zurich. They had met there year after year from the time they were babies, and there was not anywhere in the county in which it was located a nook or cranny which these venturesome spirits had not explored.

They had found places in the narrow stream that formed its western boundary, and which, as it flowed on, swelled into one of the most useful navigable rivers in America, where even they, short as they were, could wade from one bank to the other; so that when returning to school in the autumn they told their school friends they had, unaided and alone,

crossed over that mighty river on foot, they were variously regarded as heroes or great romancers according as their schoolmates believed or disbelieved the tales they told. They had found caves on the neighbouring mountains wherein they had set themselves up as wild men to their exceeding great delight; they had found deep forests which they explored, in the fond belief that they were the first ever to set foot within those dark recesses; but, best of all, they had found an old wooden flume which ran from the outlet of the lake almost to the river; a flume that had once conveyed the lake waters down past the mill, so that the mill-wheel might be turned; a flume built like a barrel, five hundred feet in length, of wood, and bound together by strong iron bands. For possibly two hundred feet it ran underground, and for ten or twelve years had been in a state of disuse and decay.

When the owners of the pulp-mill had been compelled to close it up for several winters because the water had frozen, they bethought themselves of using steam to make their machinery go, for steam could be used from one year's end to the other if they so chose, and willing workers would not be thrown out of employment for a month or two every year through no fault of their own. So the flume was closed at one end, and the stream which had once fed it was allowed to find its way over its natural course to the river. The method adopted to turn the water aside was the simplest they could devise, and consisted simply in letting down before the flume entrance a stout bit of planking, which held the flowing stream in check, and sent it back over its old course.

To Jack, Ditto, and Likewise the flume was a never-ending source of enjoyment. On hands and knees they had often crept from one end of it to the other, and in order to get out of it they had cut away a portion at the upper end, making a hole large enough to serve their purpose. Here they played games which a possession of that sort would suggest. Jack, for instance, would pretend that he was an Indian, and the flume would be his lair. Here he would be traced by Ditto

and Likewise, besieged and forced to surrender, or to capture his pursuers, according to the course the three had previously decided upon.

It was their hiding-place after some particularly mischievous bit of daring in which they sometimes indulged. They had done about all things there except pass the night within it. It never lost its charm to them, even though they did once stumble over a tramp asleep at its lower end, to disappear into its pitchlike depths in flight when that surprised individual sat up to look about him, and discover if possible what it was that had disturbed his rest.

It so happened that one Fourth of July, Jack, Ditto, and Likewise put the flume to a new use, and very nearly destroyed it and several other things of greater value. The boys had spent their day very much as boys usually spend the Fourth. They had risen at five in the morning to assist in firing off the old brass cannon, which had been loaded to the muzzle the night before to usher in the day of Independence with the appropriate salute. They had, I am sorry to say, stampeded more than one herd of cows on their way to pasture by hurling torpedoes at them, and I half suspect that it was they who let off a giant cracker in a coffee-grinder fastened to the back-door jamb of the hotel kitchen, with the result that every vestige of it disappeared in the air.

As the day wore on and their stock of fire-crackers was nearly exhausted, it occurred to Ditto that the flume would not be a bad place in which to set off a few of the remaining giant crackers, so the three boys, gathering up what little ammunition remained, repaired to that favoured spot. They were by no means disappointed with the result, for the crackers made an unusually weird noise as they exploded in that long tube, a noise which reverberated up and down its length in a manner suggestive of a cannonade. Of the fact that horses passing along the road under which the flume ran were rendered nearly frantic by their efforts, they were in profound ignorance. A boy ten feet underground cannot be expected to note very closely what is going on above his head,

and a pleasant hour or two was passed by Jack, Ditto, and Likewise listening to the noises they made. Then when the last giant cracker had fulfilled its mission, the fatal notion came into the mind of Ditto.

"I say, fellows," he said, his face getting crimson with the importance of his idea, "wouldn't it be fun to set off a rocket at this end and see it come out at the other end?"

It was certainly an exciting idea. It never occurred to Ditto that it might be a dangerous thing to do. Boys rarely think of consequences. The fun of the thing was all he thought of, and it was all Jack and Likewise thought of, either. The idea appealed equally to all of them.

"It would be just elegant!" cried Jack.

"Let's do it," said Likewise.

And so it happened that the three youthful scalawags hastened home and extracted a couple of the largest rockets from the supply of fireworks their fathers had brought from New York.

All through supper they were less like real Jacks than jumping-jacks. They could not keep still with thinking about their grand scheme for the evening, and for the first time in his life Ditto was unable to eat his jelly-cake and preserves, which nearly resulted fatally for his evening's fun, for his mother, noting that the sweets he had always so dearly loved were taken from the table untouched, began to fear that he was ill, and suggested that he should take a hot bath and go to bed early.

"I'm all right," he said, with a slight trace of impatience in his voice. "I'm only excited, that's all."

"I don't wonder much," said his father. "You have made noises enough to-day to excite a mountain."

"That's it," said Ditto. "And then I'm looking forward to the fireworks, you know."

"Of course you are," said his father. "I used to be the same way."

So it turned out all right for Ditto. The hot-bath idea was dropped and the bed hour was indefinitely postponed.

At eight o'clock the fireworks were filling the skies with fire.

Rockets hissed through the air, and on reaching the height of their glory broke and sent varicoloured stars flying in all directions; but, strange to say, Jack, Ditto, and Likewise were not there to see them.

They had met, according to agreement, at the lower end of the flume.

Trembling with excitement they placed one of the rockets in position, and Ditto touched it off with a piece of punk.

True to its mission it gave a fearful hiss, and disappeared in the darkness of the flume for ever.

No sooner had it been touched off than the boys clambered excitedly up to the road, from where they had expected to witness the glorious exit of the coloured stars at the other end of the flume; but, alas for their expectations! they were grievously disappointed.

They could see nothing but the blackness of the night.

Nothing came out at the other end.

"Must have stuck somewhere," said Jack.

"May have been a bad rocket," said Ditto.

"Good thing we brought two of 'em," said Likewise.

The remark of Likewise was more to the point than those of Jack and Ditto, for it suggested further action. In haste they descended to the opening, and placed the second rocket in place.

"Let me light it," said Jack.

"All right," said Ditto. "But wait until Likewise and I get back on the road again. Maybe the other came out before we got there."

"Oh, you can light it," said Jack, to whose mind seeing the rocket come out was rather better than the mere business of lighting it.

"I'll tell you what," said Likewise. "We'll tie the punk on a long stick, and light it from the road. Then we can all see it."

This suggestion was pleasing to the other two conspirators,

and the course suggested by Likewise was adopted. A large stick was found, and the punk securely fastened to it. Then the three climbed back to the road again, and from there the second rocket was set off. Like the other it hissed and plunged onward through the flume. Like the other it failed to appear at the other end, and after waiting about for ten or fifteen minutes the three boys solemnly wended their way home, very much disappointed with the results of their experiment.

They little knew what was going on while they slept that Fourth of July night as the result of their attempt to send rockets through the flume, but they found out early on the morning of the fifth.

When they met at about seven o'clock for their usual early morning romp they found a number of village boys running towards the mill.

"The mill's on fire!" cried one of the boys.

"What?" shrieked the three Jacks, looking at each other in consternation.

"The mill's on fire. The flume's nearly all burned up, and the mill's caught too," another boy called back to them.

The three Jacks started pell-mell for the scene of the fire, Ditto in the lead. He was very much upset in his mind. He remembered that he was the one to suggest the rocket idea, and he felt certain that it was the rockets and nothing else that had caused the trouble. When they reached the mill they found that the report was only partly true, but bade fair soon to be entirely so. The flume was blazing merrily, and the mill was in great danger. The fire was drawing nearer and nearer, and there seemed to be no way to put it out.

If the mill once caught nothing could save it, for it was a veritable tinderbox, and Zurich had no fire-engines. Zurich was too poor to have any of the modern appliances for putting out fires, and the only engine in town capable of pumping water on a fire was in the mill itself, and it was

locked. Pails only were at hand, but they could be of little use in such a crisis.

Poor Ditto's heart almost stopped beating when he realised this.

It would be interesting, of course, to see the mill burn if the fire broke out from some carelessness on the part of the mill people, but the thought that he and Jack and Likewise had really set it on fire, even though unwittingly, took all the pleasure out of it. The other Jacks were equally disturbed, and almost disposed to weep. Weeping was of little use, however, for still the flume blazed on, the flames drawing nearer and nearer to the mill as time passed.

"Where's Ditto?" cried Jack, breathless with excitement, as he took in the situation with a glance.

"I—I d-on't kn-know!" panted Likewise. "Oh, Jack, what shall we do?"

"There he is," cried Jack, ignoring the question as he caught sight of Ditto running along the top of the flume toward its upper end. "What's he after?"

"I don't know," replied Likewise excitedly, "but I'm going to see."

And the two boys darted after Ditto. By this time the flames had almost reached the mill, and smoke was pouring in great volumes out of the little hole the boys had made up by the thick plank that held the water back.

"Hurry up, fellows," cried Ditto. "If we can move the board we can put out the fire. The water 'll run through, and it will be all right."

But it was a vain effort—the board could not be moved, and almost beneath the boys' feet the flames burst forth. Try as they would they could not get the board out of the way, and they had about given up in despair when, with a noise like the booming of a gun, the board broke in twain, the force of the water sent its two halves flying through the flume, and, following close upon them, the stream leaped through in a mighty tide, and the mill was saved.

The flood of water had put the fire out.

The flames themselves, eating slowly the night hours through, had so burned the obstruction to the water that the board had weakened and burst, and the fire by its own work was deprived of the prey it was about to devour.

So it happened that Jack, Ditto, and Likewise got more excitement out of setting off rockets in the flume than they expected, and became convinced at the same time that the least dangerous method of playing with rockets was to set them off in the manner usually followed by less adventurous spirits than they.

BOYHOOD AND YOUTH.

"PIPPINS."

HOW HE BECAME A JOURNALIST

BY RAY STANNARD BAKER.

"PIPPINS" they all called him in the office, from the city editor down.

Pippins was a serious little fellow, with round, blue eyes. He had just left college, beaming with confidence in himself. When he came into the reporter's room for the first time, Frawley, who "did city hall," paused in the midst of a story and looked him over from his polished shoes to his red and white complexion.

"Hello, Pippins," he said good-naturedly; and it was "Hello, Pippins," ever after. Pippins' real name—the name which he signed to a great many poems that had never been published—was James Northcote Lawrence.

A newspaper office asks, "What can you do?"—not "Who are you?" And so, somewhat to Pippins' surprise, no one expressed the slightest curiosity regarding the beribboned diplomas which he had brought to Chicago in the top tray of his trunk as a passport to a shining future, or made any inquiries about his family in the east. And when he confided to Howard fifteen minutes after he made his acquaintance that it was his ambition to become a great "journalist," he was answered with a grim smile. Howard, who was content to call himself a "newspaper man," had just come in.

with his cane hooked over his arm, from Arizona, where he had been to "do" a little Indian squabble; and he was ready to start for Honolulu by the next train if necessary.

Another thing surprised Pippins. He was sent out to report for the paper a fire in Kinzie Street, and he came back wildly excited, his first paragraph repeating itself in his head. As he wrote he was keenly conscious of his Latin and French, and he sprinkled in a metaphor here and a simile there, to make the story sparkle, as he said to himself.

The next morning he hurried out and bought six copies of the *Ledger*—one for himself and the others to send to his friends. The fine article was not on the first page—that surprised and pained Pippins—or on the second, or on the third. Finally he found a paragraph buried away in a corner of the paper. His Latin and French and all the metaphors had been remorselessly cut out, and where he made the "lurid flames leap frantically" they only "burned." He dropped the six *Ledgers* in the nearest ash-barrel.

Pippins wore a doleful face to the office, and confided his troubles to Howard, and to the night policeman, and to Conover, who "did" courts, and to every one else who would listen. And they all smiled and slapped him on the back, and assured him that the copy-readers and the night city editor didn't know their business.

"'Lurid flames' is all right," said Bradley. "It's had the sanction of the profession for one hundred and fifty years—and you go right on using it, Pippins. Genius will win in the long run."

And so Pippins toiled on, commenting to himself bitterly that high-grade literary work was not really appreciated. Nor did his spirits rise when he kindly offered some of his verses "to help fill space," as he modestly expressed it, and discovered that they slid off, down into a deep waste-basket at the editor's elbow.

One disappointment followed another in quick succession, and it began to dawn on Pippins that the men in the office were laughing at him.

At first he was angry, and then, when he saw the kind of work that the unpretentious writers around him were doing and heard the stories of their pluck and perseverance, he began for the first time to lose confidence in himself. And yet he would not give up. For besides his pink cheeks Pippins had a firm, white chin, and so he only beamed less and worked harder.

While he was thus travelling in the depths of the valley of humiliation, he was sitting, one night, in the reporter's room. The city editor came in, with his hands in his hip pockets, and looked with a satisfied eye at his reporters, who were clicking away swiftly on their typewriters.

"Hurry up your copy!" he said. "Can't tell what may break loose before morning."

It was a blustering December night—the kind of a night when things happen in a newspaper office. For two hours the fire alarm bell over the door had been stuttering excitedly—it was the time for overheating stoves and furnaces—and the telephone-bell in the editor's room rang almost constantly.

Presently the alarm-bell counted "4-11"—the "scare" alarm, that told the location of a dangerous fire. Instantly the typewriters ceased clicking and every man in the office crowded to the doorway. There was only a moment's hesitation, a quick order by the city editor, and five men hurried down the long hall.

It was a hotel fire, and there might be a long list of killed and injured; and the *Ledger* must not fail to beat its old enemy the *Times*.

Hardly was the fire force gone when a murder in Clark Street called out four men more, and Pippins was left alone in the big, littered room. He was deeply disappointed because they had not sent him out on the stirring news of the night. He tipped back his chair and drew his hat over his eyes.

In the corner the copy-boys were squabbling, and now that the typewriters had ceased clicking he could hear the droning of telegraph instruments, the "pish—pop" of the

pneumatic tubes, and the nerve-wearing sound of saws ploughing through type-metal in the stereotyping rooms far below.

The city editor had locked his door and gone home for the night, looking into the night city editor's room as he passed. Two flashily dressed, red-faced men had come in to see the sporting editor and had gone out again; and Pippins' spirits sank lower and lower.

"I'll get out of this!" he said savagely to himself. "I'll apply for a job as elevator boy. Perhaps I can do that kind of work."

A pair of feet came banging suddenly to the floor.

"What's that?" shouted the voice of the night city editor into the telephone. "Are you sure?"

Then the night city editor came rushing into the reporter's room.

"Where's Frawley? Isn't Conover here?" he fretted. "Always out when they're wanted!"

He looked down the hall, and then he spoke to Pippins.

"Pippins," he said, "I'll have to send you."

Pippins winced at the slur.

"Hurry!" The night city editor's voice was rising. "This is the biggest thing to-night! Everything depends on you. The men at the waterworks intake crib, two miles out in Lake Michigan, have run up a distress signal. We haven't the slightest idea what's the matter. It may endanger the whole water supply of the city—or the entire force out there may be killed. A tug is going out. It leaves in fifteen minutes from the foot of La Salle Street. Now go!"

As the night city editor said the last words Pippins was already on his way, struggling into his overcoat as he ran. Reaching the street, he jumped into a cab and shouted an order to the driver. Then he sat with every muscle tense as the cab bumped swiftly through the almost deserted street. "Faster!" he called through the trap.

The whip came snapping down, the horse leaped forward, and the street lamps, with their misty halos, beat backward. After a moment's delay at a car-crossing—it seemed an hour

to Pippins—the horse stopped with a jolt at the dock. Forcing the door open, Pippins leaped out just in time to catch a glimpse of the lights of another cab swinging slowly around — another reporter was ahead of him—and then came the squeaking strain of a hawser pulling loose from a frosty tie-post.

Pippins knew what it meant. Without stopping to pay the cabman, he darted swiftly to the river's edge. The boat was already clear, and the engine was beginning to cough and sputter.

"Hold on!" he shouted.

"Too late!" answered a man who stood with a lantern in the tug's stern.

For a moment Pippins' heart almost stopped beating. Then he ran back a few steps, turned, darted forward, and leaped from the edge of the wharf into the air, shouting as he went. As fortune would have it, the stern of the tug shunted around at that moment, and Pippins sprawled in a coil of rope. He jumped up quickly and pursued his bobbing derby.

The captain ran forward.

"I'm from the *Ledger*," said Pippins calmly.

"Fly?" asked the captain.

Pippins laughed nervously.

Just then a tall man in glasses came forward.

"I didn't want to see you," he said rather curtly; "but you made a fine leap. My name's Keenan, of the *Times*."

"And mine is Lawrence, of the *Ledger*. We're sworn enemies, I suppose," answered Pippins.

Pippins felt a sudden wave of joy swell up in his heart. He had often heard of the great Keenan—the Keenan who had been through half-a-dozen Indian wars and had brought back a long, jagged scar on his cheek as a souvenir of one of them. Every young reporter in Chicago knew Keenan at a distance and worshipped him. But Pippins knew, too, that he had a hard man to beat.

"The *Call* and the *News* are behind," Keenan was saying, pointing at the dock, where two new cab-lights were just swinging up. "We've got this 'lay' to ourselves."

Pippins nodded. He was thankful to have only Keenan to deal with.

It was a bitter night. The river was full of ice, and a cutting wind blew in from the lake. Keenan shrugged up the collar of his coat and squatted calmly down close to the door of the engine-room, and Pippins paced up and down the deck. They ploughed down the river in a cloud of smoke and steam, passing bridge after bridge, until they reached the lake. Here the ice had not been broken.

"Give her all she'll stand!" shouted the captain; and the fireman, who was perspiring in front of the glowing coal-hole, hitched his sleeves higher and shovelled faster.

The tug fought for every inch it gained. Often its prow ran up on the ice, hung for a moment while the engine wheezed and grumbled, and then crashed through, with the huge floes beating up on each side and sending the icy spray far over the deck.

In spite of the piercing wind, Pippins was not chilled. His heart beat too fast with excitement, for in front of him, far out over the expanse of lake, was the intake crib, with its red signal of distress, and beyond it blinked the revolving lantern of the offshore light. Behind lay the city, with a thousand lights gleaming like holes in a wall of black.

"Can you make it, cap'n?" drawled Keenan, who had walked forward to the pilot-house.

"We've got to," answered the captain, tightening the wheel hard to the left. "Half of 'em may be dead out there, and the intake full of ice."

And for an hour the hardy little boat rammed its brass nose through the ice, and then the dark stone walls of the crib loomed above them. The tug cast its line, and Pippins waited impatiently for the men to make a landing. Suddenly he missed Keenan. Keenan had completely disappeared, and Pippins' heart wobbled in his throat when he landed and found him already deep in conversation with the crib captain. Pippins understood then the kind of an opponent he had to

deal with ; but he resolved that the *Ledger* should have a story if the *Times* had one.

They found the men in the crib in a pitiable state. One man lay dead, partly from cold and partly from exhaustion. The other men had not slept for thirty hours, and were worn out fighting the ice-floes that crowded in and threatened to choke the cavernous intake that led to the city water-mains. Pippins dodged about asking questions and getting mental photographs of every detail of the weird scene—the death struggle of a band of men that the great city, lying comfortably asleep two miles away, might not suffer for want of water. In half an hour he had saturated himself with the situation and was ready to return. He found Keenan talking excitedly with the tugboat captain.

"I tell you I can't go!" the captain was saying. "I can't push through the ice again to-night. It's growing colder, and my men have got to help clear the intake."

"Have we got to stay here?" piped up Pippins.

"That's about it," answered Keenan grimly.

Then Pippins was excited. There was no way to get in with his report now that he had it. But Keenan had drawn the captain to one side, and as Pippins again approached he heard the captain say,—

"No, sir, not for one thousand dollars! It's too dangerous, and I haven't got coal enough, anyway."

"He's been offering money," said Pippins to himself.

Pippins was learning a great many things in a very short time.

"Well, my friend," said Keenan, not at all good-naturedly, "we shall have to stay here to-night."

"Is there no other way to get in?" asked Pippins anxiously.

"We'll be awfully scooped by the men on shore who haven't a single fact."

"Fly," said Keenan grimly, relapsing into silence.

Pippins walked up and down the narrow floor of the crib thinking. Then he approached one of the workmen.

"Can you tell me if the lake is frozen over from here to shore?"

"Shouldn't wonder," was the gruff answer.

"Ever hear of any one walking in?"

"We ain't fools out here. That ice is full of holes, and if the wind shifted by a hair the fissures would open up. Besides that, the government breakwater stands in the way."

Keenan had evidently resigned himself to the situation, and was talking with the captain. Pippins passed them leisurely, walked down the stairs, and slipped through the outer door. A bitter wind whipped about him, and the lake mumbled and swashed among the piers. He picked up one of the pikepoles which the crib men used to clear the ice from the intake—a shaft of light tamarac twenty feet long—and walked to the edge of the crib.

Four feet below lay the ice. He dropped down on it silently and ran a few steps out. He knew that if he were discovered they would force him to return. Then he paused and fastened his hat on with his handkerchief and turned up his collar. Behind—a huge black hulk on the horizon—loomed the crib, with a single light gleaming at its summit. Far in front lay the government breakwater, and to the right and left, miles on miles, stretched the open water of the lake.

Pippins was now pushing forward toward the lights of the city. He slid the pole along in front of him to get warning of the presence of fissures. For a time all went well. Then there came tracts of shell ice, in which he fell and bruised himself, and rough ridges where there had been fissures—now closed with huge floes standing upright and frozen solid. Twice his pole splashed in open water, and Pippins drew back, shuddering, close to the brink of the dark lake.

Reaching the government pier, he was forced to make a long *détour* to the north with the wind in his face. He felt chilled to the bone, and his nose and ears were numb. And once he entirely lost his way among the endless ice-ridges, and his heart failed him, and he almost resolved to go back to the crib, the light of which seemed shining a discouragingly short distance away.

At last he saw the sea-wall looming up ahead, and he grew

hopeful ; but when he came nearer he found that it would be entirely impossible to scale its icy sides. He tried it, and with a crash the ice gave way under his feet, and he felt the water splash into his face. He was in above his waist.

"I'm gone now!" he said.

But he held fast to his pole and shouted. The wind played with his voice, and he knew that no one beyond the sea-wall could hear him. Then he grew desperate, and, spurred by the thought of a "beat," he lifted himself painfully with the help of the pole and rolled out on the firm ice. Chilled to the bone, he half walked, half stumbled to the northward until he reached the end of the sea-wall, and in five minutes he was on dry land. He hailed a cab, and just as the clock struck one Pippins reported at the office.

"Got a story?" demanded the night city editor.

Then he saw Pippins' clothing, and he jumped up suddenly and slapped him on the back. Pippins had never before seen the night city editor excited. Three minutes later Pippins was writing. He forgot, for the time being, all his Latin and French, and told the story as it happened in crisp, short sentences. And from under his elbow the copy-boys snatched each page as he turned it over.

The night city editor came in from the composing-room fuming and fretting over late copy. And then the presses began to boom, and the night reporters one by one went home; but Pippins wrote on and on.

The *Ledger's* first page the next morning was half filled with Pippins' story, and it was a complete "beat." The *Times* had not received a word of news from the crib.

Pippins came down at noon. Howard met him and held out his hand.

"I hear that you beat Keenan last night," he said.

Pippins smiled.

"You'll do, Pippins," he said; and the city editor said the same thing, and so did Frawley and Bradley and all of the others. And Pippins knew that he had received the greatest praise that ever comes to a newspaper man.

WON BY MORE THAN WICKETS.

BY H. HERVEY.

NO doubt about it, John Hammond did not "go down" with his new congregation; he was just a little bit "too much of a good thing."

He, a junior chaplain of the Indian Government, had just been appointed to the cure of the civil and military station of Surrhud, in the place of a clergyman who thought his duty sufficiently discharged by the perfunctory celebration of the usual services. Hammond held other views; and it was the pursuit of these views that brought him into conflict with his new flock.

Surrhud society comprised the officers of the garrison with a sprinkling of civilians—in all, about forty English people, of whom a dozen or so pertained to the fair sex. He knew beforehand that the people of Surrhud were a "fast" set; and before he had been a week in the place, he admitted that the picture had not been overdrawn.

"You'll be wasting your eloquence here, Mr. Hammond," remarked handsome Mrs. Enderby, the senior lady in the station and the first on whom he called.

"Did my predecessor do so?" asked the clergyman, unfavourably impressed with her flippant manner.

"I'm afraid he did. We are not keen on church-going, visiting the poor, and all that sort of thing. But perhaps you'll be able to amuse yourself, nevertheless."

"In what way?"

"Anything—cards, billiards, tennis, cricket. We are thinking of getting up the play of 'Judah' during Christmas. Will you take the clergyman's part?"

"I fear not, Mrs. Enderby. I'm fond of cricket and tennis, and I will gladly join in them; and for the rest, cards and billiards are well enough, but they are shorn of their chief attraction for most people if money is not staked. As for amateur theatricals, I think we can do without them."

"Ah, I see," replied the lady, yawning, and plainly giving Hammond his dismissal by turning to her other visitors, several of whom happened to be calling at the time.

Similarly at the other houses each lady affected the same frivolity of conversation—evinced the same tendency towards vanity. It was evident that three of these set the fashion—Mrs. Enderby, Mrs. Fane, and Mrs. Dennison. All seemed to devote themselves to worldliness, dress, and amusement. The remainder—all matrons, but smaller fry—were merely reproductions of their exemplars. A promising congregation truly, and one needing all the wisdom and tact in treatment that the young chaplain could command.

That evening at the club, the new clergyman constituted the staple of conversation.

"A pity so fine-looking a man is such a snuffler," remarked Mrs. Enderby. "When I spoke of amusements, he said we had weightier matters to think of; so I dropped him, and turned to Captain Tibbles, whereupon he took the hint and left."

At this, Captain Tibbles, who formed one of the group, grinned appreciatively.

"Yes," cried Mrs. Dennison; "when he was announced, the 'Graces' and Mr. Ponsonby had just come from the racket-court. Mr. Hammond looked so grave and serious that we felt glad when he left."

"Oh, my dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Langley, "I'm afraid I shocked him. The servant admitted him without warning, while I was enjoying a cigarette. I quite expected a lecture, for he looked unutterable things!"

"He has been balloted all right, Mathews?" asked Colonel Enderby of the club secretary.

"Yes, Colonel; and has paid his entrance fee."

"Is he good at anything?"

"Plays tennis awfully well," remarked Orme, one of the "Graces."

"We asked him to join in at pool yesterday," said Harris. "He declined; but afterwards he had a hundred-game with Payne, strictly for 'love,' however."

"How did he play?"

"Ran out in three breaks before Payne scored ten."

"By ~~love~~! Then he can do something beside coming the parson."

"Of course he'll be present at the dance on Saturday," said Mrs. Langley. "I wonder what he'll think of that?"

"Expect he'll turn up his eyes like a dying duck in a thunder-storm," replied Mathews, laughing.

Hammond attended the dance; the first of the season, but it was not to his taste. It was not a pleasant, reasonable, social reunion; but a vain, frivolous, and dressy show. He walked home in the small hours of the morning, grieved and amazed that people calling themselves Christian should so abandon themselves to frivolity and dissipation.

The next day, his first Sunday at Surrhud, his evening congregation was fairly large, people being curious to hear the new *padre*. He preached earnestly and eloquently; but so far from achieving immediate good, it only aroused the opposition of his hearers. From that day forth the people gave him the cold shoulder, and the young clergyman required all the Christian fortitude he possessed to help him to face the opprobrium that he met with on all sides.

Surrhud society plumed itself on a spirit of unanimity. There were no "cliques." Majority carried the day; and minority, instead of standing aloof, would speedily join the preponderance, thus avoiding all differences of opinion and clashing of tastes. To their credit be it said that the men were thorough sportsmen; and equally on behalf of the ladies let me remark that they gave the sterner sex every encouragement and countenance in all connected with outdoor recreations.

Heading the cold-weather fixtures stood the cricket match with Khaleelpore. Twice already had the rival teams met (twelve hours' run by rail separated them), resulting in a win apiece. This year the final rubber game would be played at Surrhud. The time drew nigh, and the whole place was agog with anticipation and excitement. Other amusements gave way to cricket; and, daily, all off duty would assemble at the pitches on the parade-ground to practise for dear life. The ladies would come down to watch and criticise; and by chaffing the bunglers or clapping their hands sore at anything good, they put the men on their mettle and stimulated them to do their best. Now Hammond loved our national game; he attended the ground whenever possible, but uninvited for membership, ostracised by almost every one, he was not asked to join, even at practice. No, they could not forgive his earnestness; they could not forget that sermon; they avoided him, and barely acknowledged his salutations.

* * * * *

The morning of the match—a gala day—the pitch perfection; the tents crowded—the weather cool, and the boundaries defined by a deep fringe of native on-lookers. The Khaleelporeans were confident of victory, for their bowling strength had, since the last meeting, been materially increased in the persons of two men, who were notable trundlers. Then the home team was one man short. Priestly, their best bowler, had been attacked with fever that morning, and Tibbles, who captained Surrhud, after consultation with his fellows, decided to take in a sepoy who knew something of the game.

"I say, though," whispered Langley, "there's his reverence. He looks as if he could play; why not ask him?"

"Yes!" growled Tibbles contemptuously, "and get a sermon flung at our heads if a fellow smashes a finger and cries 'Jerusalem' over it. No, thank you."

All agreeing with Tibbles, they chose the sepoy. Surrhud won the toss, and went in, Tibbles and Orme facing the bowling of Forbes and Mandley. The game opened promisingly for Surrhud. Tibbles and Orme played with

confidence, the latter especially, whose drives and glances elicited rapturous applause, from the fairer sex in particular, several of whom, in their excitement, moved their chairs out among the ropes and sat under umbrellas. Hammond, who eagerly watched the game from his position outside the tent, now found himself surrounded by these ladies, who, however, took no notice of him, but talked among themselves, intensely interested in the play. For a while matters went well for Surrhud Tibbles and Orme had both topped the quarter century, when Forbes ordered a change of bowling, he and Mandley retiring in favour of Scobell and Nugent, their recent acquisitions. Alas for the vanity of human aspirations! The new trundlers were very swift, with both-sided breaks. First Tibbles, then Orme succumbed, and then a veritable "rot"; a melancholy procession between the pitch and the tents closed the innings for a poor 78 runs.

"Good gracious!" whispered Mrs. Enderby, accosting the Surrhud captain, as he and a few others stood ruefully outside the tent, "what a fiasco! You can't hope to beat them now, can you?"

"Everything is against us!" fumed Tibbles. "Hang that chap Priestly, getting sick just when we most want him! Ponsonby, too, swears he's not up to much; says he has indigestion, worse luck!"

"How small we shall look if they win!" whimpered Mrs. Langley hysterically.

"I say, Tibbles," put in Major Fane, now joining the group, "this is a bad business! Ponsonby has just swallowed a neat three fingers of brandy to correct some confounded mayonnaise he says he tucked into last night. What are you going to do?"

"Hanged if I know! He and Priestly are our best bowlers; I relied on them. These Khaleelpore fellows will simply laugh at Mathews and Payne."

"Oh, *do* see, Captain Tibbles!" cried Mrs. Fane imploringly. "Perhaps Colonel Enderby knows of some sepoy who is a good bowler."

"Colonel Enderby unfortunately does not," replied that

officer, overhearing Mrs. Fane's words. "We're in a nasty fix, and Heaven knows how we are going to get out of it."

"If Heaven knows, perhaps Mr. Hammond can tell us," said Mrs. Enderby contemptuously.

Hammond heard his name mentioned and looked up, when Mrs. Enderby, who had spoken louder than she had intended, continued in the same voice, "He said he was fond of cricket when he first came."

The eyes of the group were turned to Mr. Hammond, and to relieve the embarrassment the colonel said, "We are in a tight fix, Mr. Hammond. Can you suggest a way out of the difficulty?"

"I think I can suggest a plan which might prove effective, but I am afraid I am not the one who ought to suggest it."

"Oh, no mock modesty, Mr. Hammond; out with it!" said Mrs. Enderby impatiently. "Time presses, and things are serious."

"Dismiss the native, and let me take Mr. Priestly's place," replied Hammond quietly.

A moment's silence of incredulity. For a while they consulted in whispers. The ladies, backed by Tibbles and one or two others, strenuously opposed the idea; but maturer counsels prevailed. The seniors opined that there would be no harm in making the experiment.

"Look here, Mr. Hammond," said Major Harris, at length turning to our hero, "we accept your offer; but you can't play in black clothes."

"My house is close by," replied Hammond. "I'll get my flannels and be back by the time you go out," and with these words he bounded away to his bungalow, on the margin of the parade-ground where they were playing.

Surrhud went out to field. Colonel Tring and Captain Forbes came to the wickets. "Halloa!" cried the former, indicating a man approaching at a run, "who have we here?"

All looked. It was Hammond certainly, but how attired? What colours were those displayed by his "blazer"? and what monogram was that over the pocket? Surely their eyes did

not deceive them! Surely the gods had not come down to them in the likeness of men! Though not a miracle, it was something akin to one, especially at this critical juncture; for the dress was the dress of the *Landsdowne Cricket Club*—of an eleven whom all there at different times had seen, holding their own against premier teams at *Lord's*, at the *Oval*, and elsewhere.

"By jingo, he's a county chap!" exclaimed Tibbles.

"A *Landsdowner*," replied Langley, recognising the colours and badge. "You'll find him all there, I bet."

"I say," called out Tibbles to Hammond, "can you bowl?"

"I think so."

"All right! Take first over and short slip, will you?"

I should occupy too much space were I to give in detail what followed. Hammond's analysis read: 15 overs, 8 maidens, 19 runs, 8 wickets. The total amounted to 62, *Surrey* thus leading by 16 runs.

On returning to the tents, our hero noticed a marked change in the attitude of the people towards him. Indeed, some were cordial, congratulating him on his bowling, and hoping he would be equally successful with the bat. Mrs. Enderby called him aside while the rest were engaged over the score-sheets

"Why did you conceal your identity?" she asked. "How is it you are such an anomaly? You have made yourself obnoxious since coming among us with your strictures. You have made many enemies, and we have treated you coldly in consequence; and yet, at a push like this, when all seemed lost, you voluntarily come forward, in spite of all that has happened, and help us! How do you bring yourself to do it?"

"Dear lady," replied Hammond quietly and impressively, "it is not mine to resist evil, but to overcome evil with good. This I have tried to do, and this only."

Mrs. Enderby regarded him seriously.

"All I can say is that it is very kind and unselfish of

you," she sighed. "However, I hope we shall make it pleasanter for you henceforth."

After "tiffin" play was resumed, Hammond being placed for sixth wicket down.

"Hang it!" exclaimed Tibbles, when Harris remonstrated at this, and urged that the clergyman should be sent to open the innings. "Why should he, a newcomer, and not even a member of the eleven? By rights he ought to go in last."

As in the first innings, so now, the Surruhud batsmen found themselves beaten by the bowling. The sixth wicket fell, with the score at 15, after losing such good men as Fane, Dennison, Tibbles, and Orme. The balance to come in were not reliable bats, and things looked "blue" for the home team.

"Keep your sticks up," whispered Hammond, as he passed Langley on the way to the vacant wicket. "Block every ball, and I'll manage the runs."

"The dickens you will!" growled Langley, looking after him.

The result proved Hammond to be no idle boaster. Lightning pace, with breaks from either hand, had no terrors for him. Exhibiting the prettiest cricket, mindful of the lessons learnt in the playing-fields of his own dear club across the sea, the young chaplain simply "collared" the bowling, and sent the Khaleelporeans leather-hunting in all directions. Judiciously treating every good ball, he "jumped" at the least deviation, the slightest suspicion of "looseness," and ran up the score by leaps and bounds. He never gave them a chance. *Malgré* the disfavour they held him in, *malgré* the stings of conscience which his reproofs and rebukes had stirred up in the souls of almost every one there, the applause was loud and heartfelt. His prowess evoked the utmost enthusiasm. He could see even the ladies—his bitterest enemies—standing in excited groups, clapping their daintily gloved hands in a very ecstasy of joy.

"I say," said Langley, on reaching the tent after being caught, "I tell you fellers what he told me—that is, just keep your bat down. He'll pile on the agony for us if we only give him the opportunity."

And so it proved. The rest, abiding by Langley's advice, treated the bowling with respect, and enabled Hammond to carry his bat for a splendid 93 runs. The total for Surrhud reached 135.

The next day, with 152 to win, the Khaleelporeans commenced their second innings with considerable misgivings. By "tiffin" time they were all out for an insignificant 52, again thanks to the parson's bowling. The victory thus fell to the same team by 99 runs; also the rubber.

* * * * *

That night there was a big dinner at the club, and many were the compliments and congratulations lavished on our hero. After "The Queen," Colonel Enderby, as senior man, made a short but very apposite speech. "Ladies and gentlemen," said he, "a parson is a parson; but so long as the unregenerate find him to be merely a parson, I'm afraid they don't lay much store by him. But when a parson proves himself to be a first-class cricketer, and, actuated by the best motives, he voluntarily comes to the front, and is the means of obtaining a victory for the very people who have been shutting their ears to his admonitions, why, then I say that parson deserves all honour, and is worth listening to. Here's to you, Mr. Hammond!"

* * * * *

"You have quite won our hearts," said Mrs. Enderby to Hammond, as, later on, while dancing was in progress, she sought him out in one of the verandahs. "I speak on behalf of myself and lady friends. Forgive all our unkindness. You must be a good man, and we will henceforth treat you with proper respect. How can we reward you for your disinterestedness? how recompense you for all the contumely you have suffered at our hands?"

"I am rewarded," said Hammond gravely and gently, as he bent low and kissed her hand.

A BUSINESS LESSON.

BY L. J. BATES.

“**B**EHIND again with your accounts this month, eh, Peters?”

Mr. James Helfy spoke kindly to his book-keeper. They were closeted together after business hours in a handsome office in Detroit, talking over the month's business.

“Yes, sir. It's impossible to get on much longer without help. I work early and late, but the business grows. You'll have to give me one of the boys, as I asked you last month. It will save hiring an assistant book-keeper. I can train the boy to fill the place. Both Mills and Porter are wide-awake, honest boys; and both are pretty well up in figures and the business. But Mills needs the promotion; he's poor; Porter's family is well-to-do.”

The book-keeper was poor himself, and was prejudiced in favour of his class. Mr. Helfy laughed.

“Tut, tut, Peters! That isn't business. Business knows no partialities. Which is the better boy for the place? That's the only question.”

“Well, sir, there isn't much choice. Mills is the carefullest boy I ever knew to obey orders exactly, and do all his work, and more, too. He's slow but good at figures, and he'll make a solid and safe business man some day. But Porter has a born business head; he's sharp as a needle, with no end of tact, quick to catch a customer, pleasing and popular and ambitious. He'll be a clipper some day—for himself, anyway.”

“H'm! Well, you shall have one of them. I'll keep an eye on them for a few days, and let you know my choice.”

If the book-keeper was prejudiced in favour of Mills because the lad was poor, Mr. Helfy was unconsciously prejudiced in favour of Porter because Porter's family were well-to-do, and had some business influence. Mr. Helfy liked the lad's alertness, his genteel manners, neat dress and general popularity. Porter inherited success; Mills was of a slower, sturdier, long-struggling family.

But Mr. Helfy was a conscientious master; he meant to give each of the boys an equal chance. For a week he watched them closely, his prejudice in favour of Porter increasing. The boy was unusually bright and "taking." Mills was unusually painstaking and thorough, but plain as poverty in his apparel and manners, more safe than sharp, and more useful than prepossessing.

On Saturday afternoon Peters gave Porter half a dozen papers and parcels to deliver. As the lad was going out Mr. Helfy stopped him, saying:

"By the way, Porter, here's a note you may deliver any time to-day. You need not report at the office again until Tuesday morning. Monday will be a legal holiday. Good time to you, my boy!"

"Thank you, sir. I hope you'll enjoy the holiday yourself, sir."

The note handed him by Mr. Helfy, Porter noticed, did not look like a business matter. It was not enclosed in an office envelope, but in a small, plain white envelope. It might be a private social message; perhaps an invitation to dinner.

As the bright-faced, confident, well-dressed lad went briskly out, Mr. Helfy thought, "I shall have to give him the promotion. He'll be a credit to the office. Yet I don't know. Mills does need it, as Peters says. I wish he was as bright, pleasing and well-dressed as Porter. He certainly tries harder to do his level best; but it doesn't come as easy to him by nature."

Half an hour later Peters sent out Mills with parcels and papers. As he was about to start, Mr. Helfy stopped him and gave him a duplicate of the note taken by Porter, but addressed

to a different name, with the same directions to deliver it, and that he need not report again until Tuesday morning, also wishing him a happy holiday. Mills responded :

"Thank you, sir. If there should be anything to report about any of these, I'll come back and let Mr. Peters know." He evidently thought more of the business than he did of the holiday.

"I don't think there'll be any need of your taking that trouble," said Mr. Helfy. "Make your deliveries, and then go and enjoy your holiday."

"Yes, sir ; thank you, sir."

After delivering his papers and parcels, Saxon Porter went to the hotel to which the note he bore was directed, and inquired for Mr. Martin Gillespie.

"Mr. Gillespie's gone away this afternoon," said the clerk.

"Where to ?"

"I don't know, but I heard him speak of spending the holiday with his sister, Mrs. Barton Brown, in Toledo."

After some further inquiries, Porter took the trouble to go back to the office and report to Mr. Peters. Peters examined the note. It looked outwardly as though it might be a social invitation of some sort. Mr. Helfy's apparently careless directions about its delivery strengthened this supposition.

However, to make sure, Peters telephoned to Mr. Helfy's house, and got a reply that Mr. Helfy had gone out. He would be informed as soon as he returned that his note to Mr. Gillespie was not delivered, that gentleman having gone out of town. So Porter went off impatient at the delay and the trouble he had been put to. Peters also presently went home.

Mills found, at another hotel, the gentleman to whom his note was directed. Delivering it, he waited to see if the gentleman wished to make any answer. Mr. Thorn read the note, said, "All right," and then asked, as Mills was turning to go :

"Did Gillespie get notice ?"

"I don't know, sir."

"Gillespie went to Toledo this afternoon. If he didn't get notice—but of course Mr. Helfy attended to that. All right."

Mills stood and thought half a minute, in his slow way. Then he asked:

"Please, Mr. Thorn, is this a business matter?"

"Business? Well, I should say so!"

"Then, sir, can you give me Mr. Gillespie's Toledo address? Mr. Helfy may wish to know it."

"Can't. He's gone to his sister's, Mrs. Barton Brown. I don't know her street and number."

Mills went back to the office. Peters had gone, and the janitor was locking up. He went in and found the note to Gillespie lying upon Mr. Helfy's desk. So he hurried to Mr. Helfy's house; found that Mr. Helfy had gone to the opera; went to the opera; had no money to go in; scribbled a note; and by some urging got an usher to hunt up Mr. Helfy among the audience and deliver it. This note read:

"MR. HELFY,—Your note to Mr. Martin Gillespie could not be delivered. Mr. Gillespie has gone to Toledo to spend the holiday with his sister, Mrs. Barton Brown. I looked up her address in a Toledo directory. It is 711, Maumee Ave. Mr. Thorn got his note. He said all right. He asked me if Mr. Gillespie was notified, and seemed to think it important business. I am waiting at the door, if you have any orders.

"GORDON MILLS."

This note brought Mr. Helfy out, looking worried. He questioned Mills closely; and finding that the note brought by the usher contained all that the boy could report, he said:

"You've done me a good turn, Mills. If you had not brought me this news I might have been in a bad fix. Now I shall have to telephone to Gillespie, and I may be engaged all the evening. I wish you to take care of Mrs. Helfy and my daughter. Here is my ticket. Tell them not to worry if I am out late, and explain how I'm called away on business. You'll enjoy this opera—it's a good one."

Mills flushed at the idea of attending the opera, in a reserved seat, in such distinguished company.

"Thank you, sir," he began, eagerly; then he hesitated; "but——"

"Well, sir? Don't you care for opera? Or perhaps Mrs. Helfy and my daughter are not to your taste?" Mr. Helfy chuckled.

"Oh yes, sir. I should so like to go in! But I haven't been home. Mother expected me more'n an hour ago: she'll worry. Then I'm not dressed fit to join Mrs. Helfy, you see. I'm in my office suit; it's the best I've got, but 'tisin't fit for opera with your family. Besides——" he hesitated again.

"Never mind your clothes. Mrs. Helfy and Mary will welcome you, not a suit of clothes. I'll send a messenger-boy with a note to your mother. Is that all?"

"No, sir; only——"

"Well? I'm in a hurry."

"If you'll lend me a quarter, sir; and if Mrs. Helfy can wait five minutes. You know we were very busy to-day; so I didn't go to lunch at noon, and with this errand I haven't had any supper, and I'm just faint."

"What! No dinner! No supper! Here, take this dollar and run across the street to that restaurant. Take your time to eat a good hot meal. You'll have plenty of time; the curtain won't rise for ten minutes yet. And tell Mrs. Helfy to have John drive you home, if she doesn't think of it herself. Nothing to eat all day! Now look here, boy; don't let me ever catch you again going without your regular meals even to look after business—not unless it is something very extraordinary. Great Scott! What was Peters thinking of, to allow such a thing? There, run along, and enjoy yourself."

Never did a boy enjoy an opera more. Mrs. Helfy and her daughter received him with gentle courtesy, just as if he were their chosen escort. Mrs. Helfy herself thought to order John to drive him home, and John performed that duty with all the decorum due to an honoured guest of the family. The next morning Gordon gave his mother a rapturous account of his evening's pleasure.

On Monday both the boys enjoyed their holiday greatly,

though differently. Porter went on a steamboat excursion in the afternoon with a company of young people of good society, and had a good time. Mills, whose mother needed all his earnings for necessities, could not afford such an expense; but he took part in an exciting baseball match between his club and another.

It happened that, about noon, the boys met at the office, where they went to view a procession from the office windows, the janitor admitting them. When they were going out a gentleman stopped them, and inquired of Porter:

"Aren't you Helfy's boy?"

"Yes, sir."

"Know where he is?"

"No, sir. Office closed to-day. Do you wish to see him?"

"I hoped to catch him here."

"Anything important, sir, worth hunting him up?"

"Don't know; dare say it'll do as well to-morrow. I just meant to give him a friendly pointer; but it's likely he knows more about it than I do. In case he doesn't, though——"

He took from his pocket a card, bearing upon its face the words: "*Asa Deming, Real Estate*," and wrote upon its back with a pencil:

"F. P. got a second option from G. & T. this morning, covering yours. He means to snap it if you haven't closed at sharp noon to-morrow."

"Give that to Helfy before nine o'clock to-morrow morning," he said, and then strolled away.

Porter put the card in his pocket and started off. Mills stopped him.

"If I were you," he said, "I'd find Mr. Helfy right off. If that G. & T. means Gillespie & Thorn, he may want to know it at once."

"Nobody can do any business to-day. You heard what Mr. Deming said—nine o'clock to-morrow morning will be time enough. I'll see that Mr. Helfy has it as soon as he comes to the office, about eight o'clock. He doesn't like us to disturb him when it isn't really necessary."

He hurried away. Mills looked after him thoughtfully till he was out of sight. Then he went his way, frequently pausing to think it over. By-and-by his slow cogitation settled in definite resolve.

"Likely Mr. Deming and Saxon are right," he thought. "Nobody does business to-day. But Mr. Helfy may wish to know it right off. I'll hunt him up."

So he spent an hour or more of his precious holiday chasing Mr. Helfy over the city, until he found him. Then he did not say anything to implicate Porter; he merely reported:

"Mr. Asa Deming was at the office about noon to see you, Mr. Helfy. He said he wanted to give you a friendly pointer: that F. P. got a second option, covering yours, from G. & T., this morning; and he means to snap it at noon sharp, to-morrow, if you haven't closed. He wanted you to know by nine o'clock in the morning. But I thought you might want to know it at once, not knowing what it means; so I hunted you up."

Mr. Helfy started and looked greatly annoyed. Mills thought he was displeased at being disturbed with business during his holiday. So he began to apologise:

"Perhaps I oughtn't to have bothered you; but I thought, if it is important, you ought to know; and if it isn't, you are the one to judge. If I've annoyed you, I'm real sorry, sir."

Mr. Helfy still looked vexed and even angry. But he put his hand kindly on Mills's shoulder and said: "It's not you I am vexed with. You've done right—just right. Thank you for taking so much trouble on your holiday. Now go and enjoy yourself while you can."

He strode hastily away, with a troubled face; and Mills hurried off to join his baseball club.

Mr. Helfy did not enjoy his holiday; and he spoiled it for several others. He prevented his lawyer from going out of town. He called two or three bank officers out from their dinner-tables, or from other social pleasures, and compelled them to spend an hour or two upon urgent business. He

hunted up Thorn and kept him reluctantly busy all the afternoon. And he had not gone to bed in twenty years more tired, or more triumphant, than he did that night.

The next morning the bank with which he dealt would have the largest credit to his account he had ever managed ; this to meet the cheque that he would give to Gillespie & Thorn. What made his triumph greatest was that he had got ahead of F. P., the big millionaire speculator. This would be talked of on change ! F. P. would now have to buy of James Helfy, and pay him a good profit.

Tuesday morning Mr. Helfy was at his office punctually. He received Porter's report and Deming's note apparently as matters of small importance, greatly to Porter's relief, for Porter had had doubts whether Mills's advice had not been good. Then he sent for Mills and Peters.

"Hereafter, Peters, Mills will act as your assistant. His salary will be increased one half. I shall need another boy in his place. If either of you know of a good one, bring him to me. Never mind thanks, Mills. Continue to be as faithful as you have been, and you'll get on."

He dismissed Mills, and spent a long time explaining to Peters a memorandum. When this was done he remarked, thoughtfully :

"I shall expect you to push Mills along. I'm under larger obligations to him than he knows of. He'll do us credit."

ADrift ON A BELL-BUOY:

*A BOY'S CURIOSITY LEADS TO AN UNPLEASANT
ADVENTURE.*

BY OLIVER G. FOSDICK.

WHEN I was twelve years old, during the summer vacation of 1860, I spent the month of August on the Government schooner *Ranger*, then charged with the duty of supplying oil and provisions to the lighthouses between Buzzard's Bay and Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Sometimes the *Ranger* set buoys and assisted revenue cutters in taking soundings ; so we had a busy time, on the whole.

One day early in the month our captain, whose name was Gardner, learned that the bell-buoy at Nantucket bar had gone adrift, after having been run into by a vessel. Next morning we sailed from Nantucket to look for it, and found it before long near Vineyard Sound. But it was not now adrift. It was in tow of the *Sea Hawk*, a tramp "anchor-dragger," a sloop, one of a class of vessels that go around derelict ships, securing their chains, anchors, or anything of value that can be taken from them.

The skipper of the *Sea Hawk* said that he had found the buoy off Tuckernuck Shoals. He objected to surrendering it without receiving pay for it. Our captain ended the dispute by ordering him to take the buoy into Holmes Hole, now Vineyard Haven, where we would call for it.

"You'll have to pay for it," cried the *Sea Hawk's* captain, in a squeaky voice, across a wide space of water, as we left him ; and "You'll have to pay for it yet," was what he

squeaked late that evening, when our skipper was leaving the *Sea Hawk*, after taking the buoy without having made any payment. Whether the lighthouse board did or did not admit the squeaky captain's claim I know not to this day.

The buoy was to be hoisted to our deck and taken to its former position at Nantucket bar. But instead of hoisting it that evening, our captain, as the hour was late, resolved to leave it all night moored to the *Ranger's* stern by the same rope the *Sea Hawk* had used in towing it.

Before long all hands were in bed except the watch, and as discipline was little observed on such a craft as ours thirty-four years ago, I suspect that the watch went to sleep, too. At any rate, the decks were deserted when I came up from my berth in the steerage to have another look at the buoy.

Somehow it had fascinated me. What a weird, dismal-looking object it was, hobbling up and down! Then I wondered why its bell did not ring, though there was movement in the water about us. In the dusk it seemed like a human being, and indeed, the round, cage-like basket on its top, which was its distinguishing mark in the daytime, was very suggestive of a person's head.

An impulse to try to make its bell ring took possession of me. Once I crawled half over the stern, meaning to lower myself to the buoy by its rope, but of this I thought better, and crept back to deck. Then I went to my berth for a while. Still I could not sleep.

"What is the reason that bell does not ring?" kept running in my head. So after a long time I went up and sat down on the cabin skylight. Glancing at the clock within, I saw it was one o'clock in the morning.

The night was beautiful, though breezy. Our *Ranger's* mast and rigging were clearly shown against the sky. I lay back and watched the black-painted end of the mast as it traced all sorts of fantastic figures in and out among the stars; for there was a gentle ground swell, and the schooner was idly rocking on it.

The tide was running out, and I could plainly see the *Sea*

Hawk some distance astern, for there was a clear, waning moon. The surf, as it broke on the beach, could be plainly heard.

Going again into the steerage, I took a blanket and pillow from my berth, and spreading the blanket on the deck, I lay down and tried to sleep. But all was of no use; my thoughts would revert to the buoy, and why the bell did not ring.

Giving up all thoughts of sleep, I arose, walked aft and looked at the buoy. There it was, tugging at the hawser, for the tide had swept it across the stern and off the quarter of the schooner.

Taking hold of the rope, I found I could draw it up closer. The bell was there all right—why did it not ring? I must know. So, tying the rope to a cleat that was close at hand, I slid down the hawser until my feet touched the ball-like basket on its top.

The cold, damp iron chilled my bare feet; for when I last arose from my berth I had not stopped to put on my shoes and stockings. At first I thought my courage would fail me, but the sight of the bell so close at hand renewed my curiosity. Letting go my hold on the rope, I clambered down the iron cage that held the bell.

The buoy, which was made of iron in the form of a hollow pyramid with its apex in the water, had a top surface which was flat and about five feet in diameter. Over this was the pointed lattice framework in which the bell was hung.

A large hole had been stove in the lattice framework by the vessel which had set the buoy adrift. As the frame was about five feet high, I had no difficulty in crawling inside. Putting my hand on the tongue of the bell, I found that it was tightly covered with canvas sailcloth, which the men on the *Sea Hawk* had tied there to stop its constant ringing.

For some minutes I was so enraptured with my strange surroundings that I paid no attention to the *Ranger*. When I did glance toward her I was amazed to find the buoy adrift.

The rope that held it to the vessel had been much worn

by the constant chafing it had received while the *Sea Hawk* towed the buoy. It had let me pass down safely, but when my weight was added to the tossing buoy, after the rope had been drawn up taut, it gave way, and the tide was sweeping the buoy out of the harbour, with myself a prisoner on it.

Terrified at the idea of being carried out to sea under such strange conditions, I screamed. But the *Ranger* was now a hundred yards away, the surf was roaring, and no shipmate heard me. The buoy moved on a course right past the *Sea Hawk*. Oh, how sweet would that old skipper's squeaky voice have sounded, could I have heard it reply to my screams! But everybody seemed asleep on the sloop.

I thought of throwing myself overboard and trying to swim to the vessel, but the sight of the phosphorescent water frightened me. The buoy had a piece of cable attached to its sunken end. This, in the shoal water of the harbour, dragged along the bottom, and a bright streak in the water marked its course. This scared me, because I could not imagine what it could be.

The land and lights ashore appeared like a huge black cloud, with here and there a little star peeping out. It was useless to call for help to that distant vision. God seemed nearer. In the agony of my heart I knelt and prayed fervently for aid.

After that I felt better, and remembered the bell above my head. Could I call some boat by ringing it? I quickly clutched at the canvas covering and tried to tear it off. But my little fingers bled as I tore my nails in vain attempts to loosen the hard cloth.

By this time I had drifted abreast of West Chop Lighthouse, and was being swept out into Vineyard Sound. The waves had grown larger, and they were continually washing over the buoy. I was wet to the skin; and as the morning air was cold, I was soon chilled through.

Just then I saw something alight on the top of the buoy. One of the owls from the mainland, in its flight across the Sound, had sought a resting-place over me. As I half-arose

from my sitting position, the bird gave a hoot and looked down on me with its large, bright eyes. Then it rose from its perch, circled around for a moment, probably wondering what strange creature I was, and flew away. I was glad to see it go, for its eyes seemed to pierce me through.

When out in the Sound and fast drifting toward the open sea, I made another attempt to loosen the canvas. Standing upright, I caught sight of a bright object in the water, which seemed to be following the buoy. What could it be?

It was long, and looked like a snake as it followed wriggling after. I shut my eyes, for I dared not look at it. Still groping with my hands on the canvas, I found a knot at the top, that in the darkness I had not felt before.

It was easily untied, and the muffle was soon removed. As I struck the tongue of the bell on its side it rang out a sound that caused me to fall flat on the buoy and cover my ears with my hands. Now with the tossing the ringing continued.

Oh, how its deep tone did strike into my ears! *Dong, dong, dong, dong*!—would it never stop? Sometimes for a moment it remained quiet, and I would uncover my ears; then it would start to ringing again, and its awful sounds penetrated my brain. It seemed as though I must faint.

With the swash of the water, the deep dong of the bell, my wet clothing, my numb limbs, and an occasional screech of a sea-fowl, my senses were fast leaving me. Then I caught sight of the fiery serpent again, and lost consciousness.

When I regained my senses I was lying on the after hatch of a fishing-vessel, and the captain and officers stood around me. They had seen the buoy at the first streak of daylight, with my unconscious body lying across its top. They had sent a boat and brought me on board. The buoy they had secured, and were towing it to the Government wharf at Wood's Holl. Late in the afternoon, after a long, warm sleep, we reached Wood's Holl. Just as we were moored, I saw the *Ranger* coming to anchor.

She lowered a boat, and soon it was alongside of the wharf. As Captain Gardner stepped out, I reached out my hand,

which the amazed man clasped with joy. He and his crew had supposed that I had fallen overboard.

As he took me back to the *Ranger* in his boat, we passed the buoy, and the memory of the fiery serpent was brought back painfully. Captain Gardner inquired the reason of my emotion, and I told him of the last few moments before I had fainted.

"Well, boy," he said, "your story has a strange sound, but let's pull the boat up alongside of the buoy, and perhaps I can explain the mystery of the fiery fish."

When beside the buoy he pointed his finger, and said, "Yes, I am right. There is your snake, boy."

Down beneath the water, and hanging idly to the broken cable below the buoy, was a long string of kelpish seaweed. It was alive with a fine species of animalculæ, that had shone in the darkness with a brightness that might well have deceived a less experienced person than I was then.

JUST IN TIME.

THE SINGULAR ACCIDENT THAT BEFELL A BOY LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEER.

BY MANLEY H. PIKE.

IF George Farnham's mother had chanced to lose the family almanac, neither she nor George could have told what hour would be their dinner-time next day without doing a regular sum on a slate. Even they could not have been sure until they had consulted three other pamphlets.

The reason was that George's father ran the fast freight over the branch road from Megalopolis to Port Connel, where the big ocean steamers finish their lading; and as the bar can be crossed only at flood tide, and flood tide comes at a different hour every day, and the train always made close connections, you will see that it never had the same timetable twice in succession. Consequently, Engineer Farnham's meals were as irregular and shifting as if he had worked in a tide-mill.

Sometimes he got up and had breakfast in the middle of the night. Sometimes he had supper and went to bed at three in the afternoon. Sometimes he did not go to bed at all for thirty-six hours, and then slept fifteen. His was the hardest run on the road, but for that very reason the best paid; and when he and his wife and son did have dinner, it was a good one. And this meal was always planned to enable the three to take it together, no matter at what hour it came.

A good appetite, too, George used to bring to his dinner,

especially after he had been helping his father on the engine. There were not many men on the South Eastern who could run a greater number of miles with less wear and tear or a smaller consumption of coal than Rufus Farnham ; and if his son were not his equal in a few years more, it would not be from lack of teaching nor zeal in learning.

George could keep as steady a heat as Haskell, the regular fireman, even if he was not so strong with the broad scoop shovel. He knew each part of a locomotive, and could run every bit of the Port Connel branch in workmanlike style when the rails were not wet. He felt certain that he could make up a train in the crowded Megalopolis yard, without smashing any cars or blocking the through track, if he had only been allowed to try—which he never had been.

He would have liked to enter the company's service years before ; but Rufus Farnham meant that his son should know something beside engine-driving, and insisted upon the boy's studying regularly every day—and then there was the home work to do. So George was not riding on No. 642 as often as he wished ; but he always kept watch in the daytime to see the train pass.

One afternoon, however, when he should have heard it whistle for the county-road crossing up the line, he waited and waited in vain for the familiar blasts until he began to fear some accident. When at last he heard No. 642's roaring voice,—she had a most unearthly whistle,—it spoke in three long notes and four short ones, which was Rufus Farnham's private signal, meaning, "Come to the crossing."

The engineer's house stood just beyond the top of the long grade, a mile or two out of the city, and in going to Port Connel he could not stop or slow up when he had a heavy train behind him. Therefore he was in the habit of summoning his son to the crossing to carry home whatever family purchases he might have made in town, placing them in a box fastened to the warning post at the road.

George made his usual fast time down the path to the crossing, wondering as he went why he did not hear the train

puffing up the grade beyond a ridge which concealed the track from view in that direction. Surprised enough he was when he came upon it, standing still across the county road, and saw his father coming toward him, half-carrying Haskell, the fireman, who seemed almost unable to walk.

"Hurry up, sonny!" shouted the engineer. "Tom's sick—maybe nothing very bad, but he can't go a bit farther. I'm going to put him to bed at the house, and you must fire the trip for me. Jump aboard, run her up the grade, and I'll be ready to meet you at the top by the time you get there. Lively now, my boy!"

George understood in an instant, hastened to the train, and swung himself into the cab of No. 642. He knew exactly what to do, and did it without loss of time, starting and reversing in order to back the train far enough to gain good speed for ascending the steep incline.

He felt like a king when he made the big machine shove back the heavy freight-cars with a banging of buffers and a rattling of drawheads, coupling-pins and chains as the impulse ran through the long line from one car to another.

Having taken plenty of ground, he threw the reversing lever back again and started ahead—slowly at first, until the cars, like a procession of chained giants, had finished dragging each other forward, one by one, to the stretch of their fetters; and then, gradually increasing speed, he rushed at the grade.

Behind him Willis, the front brakeman, called down with a laugh:

"Stop when you get there, young man, for low-water mark's the bumping-post on this road, you know!"

This was a traditional joke—and a fact, since the track ended at the very extremity of the company's pier half a mile out in Port Connel harbour.

Up and up the train mounted, with the steady pull of the hard-labouring engine. Near the top of the grade George saw his father standing on the bank some distance ahead, waiting. Soon he saw that it was time to slow up, for the last of the cars was just clearing the slope.

He partly closed the throttle—the engine quickened its pace instead of reducing it! Surprised, he closed it farther—and the engine went faster yet!

Before the boy could fairly comprehend what had happened, he saw his father's astonished face flash by outside, and No. 642 was thundering and swaying over the rails at full speed with the throttle tight closed.

The rarest accident that ever befalls a locomotive engine had just taken place. The throttle was disconnected!

It was like the breaking of a horse's reins, and left the young engineer as helpless as the horse's driver would be only in this case the runaway was a gigantic mass of iron and steel, weighing many tons, whirling behind it many other tons at a rate of thirty miles an hour—a great projectile, as it were, infinitely heavier than any which the largest cannon ever flings, and furnishing its own energy as it tore along.

It would be doing George an injustice to say that he was not frightened. He must have been foolhardy or ignorant indeed to have remained unmoved in such a terrible danger.

For a second or two he clung to the useless throttle with both hands, staring stupidly out of the window through which he had last seen his father—numbed, confused and quite without use of his faculties. Perhaps this condition was a piece of good fortune. A different form of terror might have driven him to jump.

But all at once he came to himself. He no longer felt fear, because his whole mind turned to the task of finding some way to stop the engine. He showed his good training, too, in the very first resolve he made—which was *not* to try to stop it by the means that lay ready at hand.

"If I reverse," thought he, "she'll surely blow out both her cylinders. Then the steam'll scald me to death or drive me out; and either way there'll be no engineer. That won't do."

Finally he grasped the whistle lever,—it was before the days when freight-engines were fitted with air-brakes,—and signalled "down brakes." The trainmen had not had time to crawl along and find out what the matter was,—they

probably had all they could do to hold on,—but that they were at their posts George knew when he felt the gradually increasing resistance as the brakes were successively set.

He took a firm grip of the window-frame in preparation for what he knew was going to happen, thereby preventing himself from being flung backward into the tender when the engine leaped upon the rails with a bound and plunge that barely missed ditching it. Then it shot onward at double speed.

"That draw-bar broke just in time," said George to himself, looking at the train, already left hundreds of yards behind. "A few pounds more of drag would have piled us all up in a heap." The boy had deliberately torn his engine loose in order to release the freight-cars and the men upon them, because he had recalled one of his father's sayings, which was, "When in a tight place, save everything else you can before you begin to think whether you can save yourself."

All this had taken some minutes. George looked at his watch, counted the clicks of the wheels as they passed from rail to rail—for the number of rails passed over in twenty seconds give the speed in miles per hour—and almost had a return of his first horror when he saw the buildings of Montrose station flying by; which meant that in less than twenty minutes, if things remained as they were, No. 642 would go off the head of Port Connel pier into six fathoms of salt water.

The line was kept clear for the fast freight, he knew. Neither his father nor the trainhands could reach any telegraph office in time to warn the Port Connel employes, while the men at the stations he passed would naturally think they saw an engine running wild ahead of the freight called out by some sudden emergency.

Moreover, even could the runaway be side-tracked, this would only substitute a smash-up on land for a smash-up in the water, and most probably one in the middle of a crowded street, besides.

"Nobody can help me—I've got to help myself, or it won't be done," was George's conclusion.

He looked at the hand-brake on the tender and moved half-way to it, but drew back, reflecting that the grinding friction and strain of the whirring wheels would certainly break shoe and chain. That wouldn't do either.

At the same instant he saw what he must do, and began to do it. He shook down the grate, and then, throwing open the fire-box door, set at work raking out the blazing coal upon the foot-board and shovelling it off at intervals, when he could no longer endure the heat.

The fire was "full up," and even the clearing out of that amount of dead coal would have taken time: but now, when every separate lump was thoroughly aglow and fierce draughts were driving through them like the blast of an iron furnace, it was not only a slow but a painful and perilous task.

Sometimes George would drop his shovel to dash water upon the smoking woodwork of the cab. Again he would be forced to retreat before the intensity of the heat which surged around him, or his smarting hands would cause him such pain that he could only rub them against each other and writhe.

After he had reduced the fire beyond a certain point, the rake was of no more use, and he was obliged to rely upon the shovel. Now he burned his wrists at almost every thrust into the furnace, and the hot air fairly bit into his brain as he stooped toward the door.

He had fastened open the whistle lever to waste all the steam possible, and the unrelieved howl that rose above all the roaring and crashing sounds of the machinery wore upon his nerves more than anything else. Once or twice he almost made up his mind to stop it, for he thought it would drive him crazy.

At last he succeeded in drawing the fire as far down as he could reach. He looked out again. The engine was certainly moving slower—he could see and feel that it was—but the flight past well-known objects told him that a mile or two more would bring him upon the pier.

Again he sprang to the shovel, pitching back the dulled

embers heaped about, until he had covered the languid fire with them; and then he began cautiously throwing water into the box,—cautiously, lest he should cause an explosion,—finishing with a number of shovelfuls of coal, which could not ignite now and would effectually smother and blanket the heat from below.

As he completed this work the rattling of the wheels changed to a rumble. A wide blue horizon opened up on both sides. He was running down the pier.

Ahead rose the masts and funnels of a great steamer lying across the pier head, and George saw that once more he must think of saving others' lives before considering himself; for he knew the ship, beside her crew, must be full of longshoremen. The fifty-ton No. 642 falling upon her would crash through to the very keelson if it did not send the vessel to the bottom.

Men were hurrying about, gesticulating and shouting at the apparently insane boy who was driving his engine straight down to destruction and piercing their ears with that unceasing whistle. Three or four tugged at a heavy timber which they intended to throw across the track, and George would have welcomed their success, whatever the danger it might have caused him; but they were left far in the rear before they had carried their burden six feet.

Steam was wasting fast and the locomotive ran slower and slower. George could have jumped now with some chances of safety, yet he did not even think of it. He meant to do his duty up to the very last moment. If No. 642 was to go over that pier-head, he would go with her.

The scream of the whistle changed into a diminishing moan, the pace slackened. George, taking a quick look ahead, threw the reversing-lever. Not before could he have ventured this; and even as it was a great hissing cloud of thick white vapour gushing up in front told him that the right-hand cylinder-head had blown out.

The strong sea-breeze sweeping athwart the track was all that prevented him from being chased from his post, since

it forced a great deal of the steam away—yet enough came into the cab to half-stifle his breathing and wholly cut off his view.

Blinded and suffocating, he remembered the brake on the tender, staggered to it, set it with a few desperate tugs—and without any perceptible interval found himself lying against the breast of a man who seemed to be emerging from a blue mist, and who said :

“ All right again, are you, my boy ? ”

Other things came out of that same blue mist—a crowd of excited men, the steamer's masts close overhead, and finally the great freight engine, No. 642, breathing out a last thin cloud of steam as she stood with her splintered pilot rearing atop of the broken tie-bumper on the string-piece of the pier.

“ If she had slid over that——” some one began, not finishing his sentence ; while some one else muttered :

“ Just in time ! ”

George felt strangely weak. His head ached and his shoulder was very sore. He perceived that he must have been thrown out and stunned, but he did not care, for he had saved the engine, the steamer and many lives.

The faint had been a piece of good luck for George, since the crowd, who were for mobbing him at first, had had an opportunity during his unconsciousness of finding out the real state of the case : so that when he came to himself he was a hero among them, as he deserved to be.

The South Eastern gave him an engine to run, and the steamship company presented him with a gold watch and a share of stock ; but George's best reward was the sense of his own ability and courage, which had enabled him to stop that ponderous runaway just in time.

HAPPY DICK, OF ARKANSAS.

BY WILLIAM DRYSDALE.

“**M**ISTER, do you think I'll meet any bears or panthers between here and Malvern?”

The speaker was a strong-built, good-looking boy, and the place was on a railroad track in a deep valley in the Ozark Mountains, in Arkansas.

It was not the idle question that timidity might prompt any boy to ask when he found himself alone in a great forest, with night approaching: it was a question based upon sound reason, for there are bears and panthers in those woods, and in the neighbouring towns bear meat and panther-skins are staple articles of trade.

I had seen this boy ahead of me on the track for some time, and had noticed that he was evidently waiting for me to overtake him. This, perhaps, made me grasp my hickory stick a little tighter, for in the distance I took him for a man, and we were on the little branch railroad running from Malvern to Hot Springs, which, as I had often been warned, was a dangerous promenade, on account of the many desperate tramps who infested that neighbourhood in winter.

“Probably not,” I told him; “but still you might, for there are both bears and panthers in these woods.”

“Do you think I could get there before dark?” he asked.

“I am sure you could not,” I answered. “It is growing dark now, and Malvern is more than twenty miles from here. This is no time of day to start; you should set out in the morning, if you want to walk to Malvern.”

“Well,” said he, as cheeringly and uncomplainingly as

though he were jingling golden eagles in his pocket, and trying to make a choice between two first-rate hotels, "I shall have to sleep in a tree anyhow, and I suppose it might as well be on the road to Malvern as anywhere. Money's rather tight here in Hot Springs."

This philosophical answer made me look at the boy closer, and I was surprised to see that he was coloured. He was so very light that I had taken him for a white boy; not the pale yellow of a mulatto, but like a country boy with the tan of two or three summers left upon his face.

"Do you live in Hot Springs?" I asked him.

"No, sir," he answered; "I just live wherever I am. I did live in Waco, Texas; but I've left there."

"And where are you going?" I asked.

"Oh, I'm noways particular, sir," he replied. "I suppose I'll get along somehow; I always have, so far. I've been travelling for five weeks, sir, and I've got as much money now as I had when I started."

"How much was that?"

"Not a cent, sir!"

It occurred to me that I had an opening for this boy for a few days, where he could be of service, and at the same time earn comfortable board and lodging. For my household arrangements in that Christmas week were very peculiar. I was living alone in a cabin in the Ozark Mountains, some miles from anywhere. There had been four of us in a camping party, and some very fine weeks we had spent in those Arkansas mountains, with a neighbouring "coloured gentleman" to come in daily and do the cooking; but the coming of Christmas had left me alone, with a few days to spend in solitude before the time appointed for me to start for the West Indies.

There was one great drawback to my solitary life in that Arkansas cabin. A "cold snap" had come on; the weather had changed suddenly from almost tropical warmth to arctic coldness. This made little difference in the daytime, but night brought trouble. Arkansas cabins are not, as a rule,

fitted with furnaces or steam-pipes. There is an open fire-place, where the cooking is done, and that must supply all the heat. We had bought great quantities of wood, but wood fires have an unhappy habit of burning out rapidly. I might leave as great a fire as I could on going to bed in my hammock, and in two hours the cabin would be as cold as Greenland.

This was the principal use I had for the young philosopher I found on the railroad track. Why should he not be my night fireman, and keep that fire blazing from bedtime till breakfast? Then there were the errands to run (and how many errands even a camping establishment requires nobody knows until he tries it several miles from any settlement), and there were the guns to be cleaned.

This proposition I made cautiously, for a boy who could cheerfully contemplate sleeping in a tree, probably without supper, and who could travel for five weeks and go hundreds of miles without money, might scorn such a position. But he accepted it willingly.

Dick, for such was his name, was so useful a boy from the first moment, and so thoroughly happy always, that he almost made me regret the coming of the day when my mountain hearth-stone should grow cold, and when smoke should no longer curl from my chimney of sticks and mud. He was, without exception, the happiest boy I ever saw; so uniformly cheerful, so ready, so willing always to sacrifice his own comfort for mine, that I named him Happy Dick. No boy ever better deserved the title.

Little by little I drew his story from him—for one of his good points was that he did not talk too much—he let off his superfluous happiness by whistling.

"Waco? No, sir, it was not just exactly in Waco where I lived, but close by. Oh, yes, sir, I can read and write, for I went to school—two winters. In the summer I worked in the cotton fields. But I don't think much of that, sir. You see, it's like this, sir. The gentlemen that have worked in the cotton fields for fifty years are worse off than I am, sir."

"You mean the coloured gentlemen?"

"Yes, sir, the coloured gentlemen. White gentlemen don't work in the cotton fields."

"But how," I asked him, "can they be worse off than you if you haven't a cent?"

"Because they're old and I'm young, sir. It don't make any difference what happens to me, I generally manage to live; but they're old and poo'ly, and they can't get along like I can. That's just the way I'd be, some day, if I stayed in the cotton fields, sir. So I made up my mind to come away."

"I suppose you ran away?"

"Oh no, sir," Happy Dick answered; "I didn't do that, sir; I didn't have any need to run away. If my old pop had wanted me to stay, I'd have stayed, anyhow. But I told him I thought I'd go away from Waco and get rich; and he said go ahead, and I went."

"So you want to be rich, do you?"

"Oh yes, sir; I intend to be. Colonel Crawford said to me (Colonel Crawford was my boss), 'Dick,' said he, 'you try to please people, and they'll try to please you.' Don't I keep the fire up good, sir?"

Yes indeed he did, and I told him so; so good that the old cabin fairly shone with the blaze every night, and the cold mountain winds had not a ghost of a chance in the chinks and crevices.

When the breaking-up day came, there came with it a great division of property. The cooking utensils, all the pots and pans and dishes that had made us comfortable, had been promised to our gentleman cook before Dick appeared upon the scene. But I had some few articles of my own to be disposed of. Item, a hammock; item, a blacking-brush; item, a white glass shade for a student-lamp, which could not be packed in a trunk with safety. These things, and some others, went to Happy Dick.

No boy can ever have been as much pleased with a new gun or a new horse as Dick was with the hammock. He

wrapped it around his neck and shoulders, and tied the ends behind him.

"It's just the thing for a boy like me, sir. Now I shall know where I'm going to sleep every night. And it's so easy to carry, sir, and keeps me warm besides."

But the lamp-shade and the blacking-brush; what would he do with them, I wondered. He had made up his mind to strike out for Little Rock, which was the opposite direction to mine; and when the carriage came for me, and I bade him good-bye, the hammock was snugly wrapped around his shoulders, the handle of the blacking-brush protruded from his coat pocket, and he wore the lamp-shade over his left arm, like a cuff. As long as I could see him, I heard his merry whistle down the road.

I did not expect that I should ever see Happy Dick again, and I rather regretted it, for there was something contagious in his happiness. His whole property was a hammock, a brush, a shade, a little change in his pocket, and the clothes he stood in. Yet how many rich men I know who would give a great deal for as much happiness in a week as he had every minute.

My journey to the West Indies was to be a roundabout one by way of New Orleans and Key West. There was a delay of several days at Shreveport waiting for a Red River boat, and the trip down the Red River took seven days more. Nearly two weeks after leaving the Arkansas cabin, I landed upon the levee at New Orleans, and almost the first person I saw there was Happy Dick. He had a blacking-box, with my brush in it, and was plying his trade. He had learned already to watch the arriving steamers and find customers as the passengers landed. But the hammock was gone, and the shade was gone.

"Dick," said I, while he was polishing my boots, which he insisted upon doing as a sort of jubilee for seeing me again, "you have lost your property. Your hammock is gone, and your beautiful lamp-shade is gone."

Instead of replying with words, he straightened up, put

his right hand in his trousers' pocket, and smilingly jingled a handful of coins. "I sold the lamp-shade in Little Rock for ten cents, sir; and when I got here, I found that if I didn't sell the hammock, they'd steal it from me, so I sold it for two dollars, sir."

"But tell me," I asked him, "how you got to New Orleans before I did. You must have come down in a parlour car."

"No, sir," he replied, quite seriously; "I came down in the boats: one boat down the Arkansas River, and another boat to New Orleans. I had a fine time, sir. I got this box in Little Rock, and blacked my way and waited my way right down the river."

"Waited your way! What do you mean by that?"

"Waited on a gentleman, sir, that had his horses on the boat. I made money coming down. But isn't this a beautiful place, sir? Is New York as big as this?"

"This is a beautiful place, Dick," I told him, "though moist. And if you were to put eight cities like this in a row, they would be almost the size of New York."

"I intend to go there some time, sir; and I hope you'll be back by that time. But, my! what a fine place this is, sir! Money's not tight here, sir. I never made so much in my life. It's just like a fair all the time. And I've been trying what Colonel Crawford told me about pleasing people, and it's all true, sir. I've pleased nearly ten dollars into my pocket so far, sir."

I cannot end this little sketch of Happy Dick with the familiar *finale* of my going to a powerful friend and getting him a situation as bank president or insurance director at ten thousand a year. Dick did not need any such assistance. He travelled from Arkansas to New Orleans in seven days, and made money by the journey, while it took me twelve or fourteen days, and cost me a number of dollars. I might better have paid him to give me some lessons in cheerfulness and thrift.

JABEZ HORTON'S CROSSBOW.

BY JAMES BUCKHAM.

JABEZ HORTON lived on the ocean side of Cape Cod, close to that vast expanse of water from whose ever-sounding shore one looks out and realises, as Thoreau says, that "one's next-door neighbour is Spain." Jabez was a small, old-fashioned boy, with a name which exactly fitted him. It seemed almost as if strangers must call him "Jabez" at first sight, because any other name would have been as unbecoming to him as a silk tile. The very lines and features of his frank, homely, honest, mature-looking face seemed to spell out *J-a-b-e-z*.

But in spite of his old-fashioned name, Jabez was the most enterprising boy in Wellfleet. He was ingenious at making all sorts of things, from osier whistles up to boats, and for quickness of apprehension, handiness, and readiness in resource there was no one of his age "below the elbow," as the forearm of the crooked cape was called, who could at all compare with him.

Jabez had all the healthy out-door tastes of a genuine country boy. He loved to ramble in woods and fields, to pick nuts and berries, to go fishing and row a boat, to swim, skate, and snowball. Of coasting he knew nothing, for the lower part of Cape Cod is as flat as a flounder. Above all, Jabez longed to go hunting, but could not, for his father would not allow him to have a gun. "It's dangerous, to begin with," said Mr. Horton, "and, besides, I don't want you to get the hunting habit." Mr. Horton belonged to the old Puritan

stock, and inherited its stern aversion for guns except as instruments of defence.

But all the boys went hunting at certain times of the year, and it seemed pretty hard that poor Jabez, with his wholesome love for all kinds of field sports, should be shut off from this crowning delight of a country boy's existence. Especially in the fall, when the ducks came flocking south, and stopped to rest and feed in all the little ponds, or lay off the sea-shore in immense "rafts," did Jabez grieve under his father's prohibition. To see, as he often did, some of the other boys jubilantly coming home to breakfast, with beautiful strings of black ducks and teal, which they had shot in the early morning from a "blind" on the shores of some pond, drove Jabez almost crazy.

"What in the world is the matter with your appetite?" his mother would ask.

And Jabez, getting up from his half-eaten breakfast, would reply dolefully, "I suppose it's because I can't have a gun, mother." At which his father would laugh, just as if Jabez had said that he was in love.

"I do think it's kind of tantalising for the poor boy," said Mrs. Horton to her husband one morning, as George Sinclair went by the house with five ducks slung over his shoulder, and called out to Jabez, who was hanging on the fence,—

"Oh, come on with the rest of us to-morrow, Jabe! You could kill 'em with a bow 'n' arrow."

Jabez gave a sickly little smile, but said nothing. Two minutes later, however, he slapped his thigh and exclaimed: "Why not? I do believe there's something in that!" Then he climbed on top of the fence, put his chin between his hands, and sat thinking.

The result was that Jabez said to his father that noon: "Father, would you be willing to let me have a big crossbow, and see if I can shoot anything with it? I'll work just as much as I do now, and twice as hard, if you'll let me."

"What a wild Indian you are, Jabez!" exclaimed Mr.

Horton. "Well, go ahead, and make your 'crossbow, only don't leave it strung up around the barn, where the chickens will roost on it and get their legs twitched off!" This was no joke on Mr. Horton's part. He was really rather afraid of his boy's inventions. Only a short time before, Jabez had made a trap for hawks, and set it on one of the high gate-posts; and a valuable rooster, for which Mr. Horton had given two dollars, flew up there to crow, and got his leg broken.

If Mr. Horton had known what a gigantic crossbow Jabez was going to make, I doubt if he would have given his consent. But even Jabez himself did not realise at first how huge his undertaking was to be. As he set about his work, however, and his plans took more definite shape, the idea expanded with the materials. For Mr. Horton, some time before, had given him an old pair of waggon wheels and an axle, to do what he pleased with; and now Jabez conceived the idea that it would be a fine thing to build his crossbow on the model of a cannon, using this pair of wheels and axle for a carriage. In this way he could mount and control a bow of tremendous power, that would hurl an arrow as big as a hoe handle for a great distance. So he fashioned everything on a scale to correspond with the wheels. The frame of his bow-carriage he made of the stoutest oak he could find in his father's woods, and the bolts and nails were of the largest and most reliable sort.

When the rest of the machine was done, he drove to Provincetown for a piece of seasoned ash of which to make his bow. He was fortunate enough to find a straight-grained stick fourteen feet long and six inches through. This was just what he wanted, and in a few days he had an immense bow hewed out, twelve feet long, and so stiff and strong that it took two men to bend it at either tip. The bowstring was of the very best twisted raw hide. But the most ingenious part of the whole machine was the cog-wheel and ratchet arrangement by which the bow was bent. This worked with a crank, and was really a very clever piece of mechanism.

By the time Jabez had completed his great crossbow, the season was pretty well advanced, and cold weather had come on. This was all the better, however, for Jabez only intended to use his big engine of destruction on the sea-ducks, which, as winter draws on, and enclosed waters begin to freeze, "bed" in the salt water off shore in immense flocks. The great crossbow was just the thing for them. Its arrows would outshoot, two or three times, the range of any shot-gun, and if one of them struck in a bed of ducks it would be likely to do great execution.

All this while Jabez had kept the building of his novel cannon a secret from the other boys of the village, for he wished to be quite certain how it would work before he posed as its inventor and owner. When all was done he got up one bitter stormy morning in the latter part of November, and set out to drag his crossbow down the road to the beach. He knew it was not a morning when there would be any chance of getting a shot at ducks, but it was for that very reason a morning when none of the other boys would be out, and he could get his crossbow down among the sand hills and hide it without fear of detection. Then he could watch for an opportunity of trying it on the ducks.

Not a soul was abroad that dark cold morning, and Jabez had the whole Wellfleet coast to himself. How the wind came howling inland between the sand hills, and what a deep thunderous roar the great ocean made as its waves hurled themselves far up the beach! But Jabez did not pay much attention to the elements, or to the magnificent scene which the breaking day began to disclose, of mountainous waves and scudding clouds and long stretches of beach white as snow with the intruding surf. He had all he could do to tug his great machine along the heavy, ill-defined road that wound among the sand hills.

Finally he turned aside from the road, and with great difficulty dragged his crossbow to a secluded hollow between two great sand dunes. Here he purposed to leave it until

some calm, pleasant morning, when the ducks would be feeding off shore. But before he returned home he thought he would climb one of the sand dunes and take a look at the black raging sea.

It was broad daylight by this time, and as the boy stood there holding on to his cap and bracing himself against the wind he fancied he saw in the offing the bare masts of a labouring ship. He watched for several moments intently, and at length saw the dark hull of the vessel borne to the top of a huge wave. Then it sank out of sight again, and for some minutes remained invisible. Jabez's heart was beating thick and fast. He wondered if the ship had foundered and gone down. No; again it rose into sight, and this time Jabez plainly heard the dull boom of a gun—the ship's signal of distress.

This was before the days of regular Government life-saving stations along our coast, with well-appointed apparatus and men constantly on the watch for vessels in distress. There were a few life-boats and small unoccupied "emergency houses" scattered along the shore of the cape; but no one had them in especial charge, and unless the inhabitants of the coast villages turned out to act as rescuers in a big storm the life-boats lay useless on the beach.

All this Jabez knew, and he also realised that he was probably the only person in all Wellfleet who had heard this ship's signal of distress and seen it labouring helplessly, with mainmast probably gone by the board, in the heavy seas. He calculated that it would hardly be an hour before the ship would ground and go to pieces outside in the surf, and unless a life-boat could be got to them all on board would probably be drowned.

It did not take the boy long to make up his mind what to do. He would run back to the village at the top of his speed and rouse the people. The Wellfleet life-boat lay under a rude shelter on the beach not a quarter of a mile from where he stood. Possibly a crew might be found who would venture out in it. That remained to be seen.

In less than an hour, thanks to Jabez Horton, a score of sturdy fishermen and farmers were hurrying down through the sand hills. The fated ship could now be easily seen about a mile off shore. She had a little canvas flying, but it seemed inadequate to give the helm control over her, and he, mainmast, as Jabez had suspected, was gone. In about twenty or thirty minutes she would be on the bar. If anything was to be done for the rescue of her crew and passengers it must be done quickly. Mr. Horton was an old sailor and a natural leader of men. He picked out eight of his neighbours to act with him as a life-boat crew; then the boat was launched, and the plucky men took their places on the thwarts, while the rest grasped the gunwales and pushed the boat as far out into the surf as they could. The great seas broke over her with terrific force, and three times, in spite of the best efforts of the crew, she was driven back on the beach.

"Once more, my hearties!" cried Mr. Horton cheerily. "Run her out as far as you can first, and then jump aboard." The crew obeyed; but they were not like men trained to this difficult task, and again the life-boat was driven in, this time broadside upon the shore.

In the meanwhile a thought like an inspiration had flashed into the mind of the quick-witted boy Jabez. As his father stood on the beach, undecided whether to make another attempt with the life-boat, Jabez ventured up and took him by the sleeve. "Father!" he cried excitedly, "father! I know what we can do. Shoot a line over 'em with my big crossbow."

Mr. Horton stood for a moment as if astounded at such a suggestion; then his face began to relax and brighten. "Boys," he cried, "here's a little chap worth more than all of us for wits! Where is your machine, Jabez—anywhere alongshore?"

"Yes, yes!" cried the boy eagerly. "Over there between those sand hills. Come on, all of you; I'll show you."

The boy darted off, followed by a dozen or more of the men,

though none of them knew what his plan was except his father. As soon, however, as they saw the big crossbow, a shout of approval went up. They knew at once what the boy intended to do. Willing hands seized the carriage, and in an incredibly short space of time it was wheeled across the sandy plain and planted on the beach opposite the ship, which was now fairly aground and careening on its side, while the great waves broke over it with hungry fury. The passengers and crew were clinging helplessly to masts, shrouds, stanchions, rail—anything that would save them from being washed overboard. It would have been worse than useless to launch the ship's small unseaworthy boats in the surf, even if, in the present condition of the vessel, it had been possible to do so. All hope now lay in getting a life-line from shore.

"Now, Jabez, give your orders!" cried his father. "This is your machine, and you are the only one who understands it." Jabez mounted the carriage of his crossbow, and took the raw hide bowstring in his hands.

"Three of you take hold of each tip of the bow and bend her!" he cried. It was done almost before the words were out of his mouth, and Jabez had deftly slipped the bowstring into its slot. "Now bring me the small life-line," he said. It was already at his hand, having been fetched by his father from the life-boat. Jabez took one of his heavy arrows from the canvas pouch under the carriage in which he kept them. Then he fastened the small life-line around the base of it with a sailor's knot, which would not slip. Laying the arrow in the groove of the bow he stepped down, and tipped the latter on its pivot-bolt until it was aimed high over the ship. Then he pulled the trigger.

The great bow straightened out with a tremendous clang, and away sped the arrow, the coiled life-line rapidly unwinding behind it. Oh, how eagerly its soaring, birdlike course was watched by the anxious eyes on ship and shore! Will the impulse of the great bow carry it far enough against the storm? Yes! Well-aimed, well-flown, good arrow! It dropped into the sea just beyond the buffeted vessel, and the line sank

down over the ship. A cry of gratitude rose even above the tumult of wind and wave.

It was but a moment's work now to fasten one end of the larger life-line to the life-boat, and the other to the cord which had been sent out to the ship. Mr. Horton had already despatched a man to the nearest emergency house for a second line to attach to the stern of the life-boat. By the time this came, tho' on board the ship had towed out the large rope, and were ready to haul away on the life-boat. The buoyant craft rode over the surf like a cork with no one in her, and was soon out in less broken water. It was not long before she reached the ship, and received her first precious load, consisting of the women and children. Then the Wellfleet men hauled her shoreward again, while those on board the ship kept her steady with a taut line. Four trips sufficed to bring off all on board; and on the last trip the boat was manned with oars by eight sailors, under command of the captain. Great was the rejoicing when the stanch life-boat came driving up the beach on a great roller with her last load. Not a life had been lost, even the steerage cat and the cook's dog being brought safe ashore. But it was scarcely fifteen minutes after the life-boat left her side for the last time that the disabled ship began to go to pieces, and all that day her wreckage kept coming ashore.

As for Jabez, I believe he never tried the big crossbow on ducks after all, for the passengers of the ship made him up a purse of five hundred dollars, and with seventy-five dollars of this, and his father's now willing permission, he bought the finest breech-loading duck-gun ever seen in Wellfleet. And if you will go to a certain tumble-down emergency house on the beach between Wellfleet and Eastham to-day, you will find a rusty old tire and a large cog-wheel that belonged to the crossbow carriage; for Jabez's invention was kept for years along-side the life-boat to be used in emergencies like that which has been described. But, so far as I can learn, it made itself and Jabez famous only once.

THE MAGIC WAND.

A STORY OF OLD WILMINGTON.

BY HOWARD PYLE.

IN the good old days of the city of Wilmington, some seventy or eighty years ago, there lived a couple in that quaint little Quaker town by the name of Vertz, better known as Dutch Dolly and her husband.

Dutch Dolly had a truck patch wherein she raised vegetables—peas, radishes, potatoes, and beans—supplying the better part of the town with such produce. Her husband was a tailor, and is described in the chronicles of the town as sitting cross-legged on his bench opposite the window that looked out on the stony street.

Dutch Dolly was a woman of much importance of demeanour, and is described as being the admiration of the rising generation when, on a fair-day or holiday, she appeared in “a black velvet hood, a bodice of the same, a petticoat of superior blue cloth, the whole dress trimmed with gold lace and two rows of gold fringe on the skirt.” But Tailor Vertz was as puny and insignificant as his helpmate was large and imposing. Dutch Dolly attended to her husband’s business, collected his bills for him, and took such good care of his money that the poor little fellow was driven to many an odd shift to get a stray cent or fip to buy him a pinch of rappee or a small glass of strong waters to comfort his inner man. One of his means for gaining small contributions was by telling fortunes, which he did by the aid of astrology, knowing a great many stars, from Aldebaran downward. For those who consulted him, chiefly serving-maids and very young girls, he

drew mysterious signs of the heavens, in which the sun, moon, and stars were represented in miraculous conjunction. But with all his faults, with all his cloudy reputation among the good folk, Tailor Vertz was a merry, chipper little fellow, and, though not entirely trustworthy, had as blithe a heart as any in Wilmington. He was a great favourite with the boys; he could whistle as sweetly as a robin, he could sing numberless ballads and songs in his queer piping voice, and had a knack of whittling little trinkets out of wood, which he sold, thus turning an odd penny from his young friends.

There were two boy friends especially, Ned Springer and Billy Shallcross by name, who were fond of loitering at odd times in the dusty, musty little shop. They looked upon the tailor as one of the wisest of men, and would listen by the hour to his stories of wonderful adventures, of perils he had escaped, of magic books he had read, and of the wonders of his black art, believing everything with the utmost sincerity, for boys were much more credulous then than they are nowadays. The little tailor delighted especially to talk of his mysterious art, and often bewailed himself that he had never been able to find a branch of witch-willow, which had such properties that he could with it tell wherever secret treasure lay buried. He generally spoke of this witch-willow in connection with old Jan Judson's house.

Jan Judson was an old Swede of a generation preceding that of which we are speaking. So far as trustworthy narratives tell of him, he appears to have been only an eccentric, miserly old bachelor. A very heavy thunderstorm which passed over the region in which Jan lived struck his house with lightning, and it was burned to the ground, all that was left being a tall stone chimney and a pile of stones. Whether it was the effect of the electricity or merely the shock of losing his property that affected the owner, certain it is that the old Swede, though rescued from the flames, died a day or two after the accident. Of course the occurrence gave rise to many weird stories connected with old Jan Judson. It was said that ONE had appeared to him in fire and flame to carry him off bodily, and

all agreed that he had left great wealth behind. Treasure-hunters had dug in the cellar, and had turned over the stones, but had found nothing, or, if they had, had said nothing about it.

One bright afternoon the two boys entered the shop of Tailor Vertz, whom they found sitting cross-legged on his bench with one finger touching his forehead, apparently sunk in deep meditation—a position which he had assumed when he heard the boys approaching. He held up his hand to enjoin silence, and they stood looking at him, a little awestruck and very much wondering. At last he roused himself, and, looking cautiously, beckoned them to draw near.

"I haf foundt it," said he in a mysterious tone.

"Found what?"

"Hush!—de vitch-villow."

"The witch-willow?"

"Yes, de vitch-villow. I haf foundt it town in de marsh. Look!" and he drew forth a slender osier twig that he had cut and peeled the day before.

"Then you'll be rich, won't you?" said Ned Springer excitedly. "All you've got to do is to walk around and to find treasure."

Tailor Vertz shook his head sadly.

"I am like many creat mens," said he; "I haf foundt creat tings, but I lack von tings."

"What's that?"

"Money. If I had von quarter of a tollar, I vas all right. I must coot a leetle hole into de vitch-villow, and melt some silfer and bour into it, and den it is magics."

"Why don't you get somebody to lend you a quarter?" said Billy.

"Dat's vot I wants to do," said Tailor Vertz. "Now I tells you vot I do. To-morrow's Plack Imp's Night——"

"Black Imp's Night! What's that?" interrupted Ned.

"Shust vait, and I tells you. To-morrow's Plack Imp's Night, de fery night de vitch-villow's able to findt de moneys. Now I am fondt of you poys: you lend me a quarter of a

tollar to melt and run in de hole I coots in de vitch-villow, and I gifs you de first lot of moneys vot ve findt."

"But suppose you don't find any?" said Ned dubiously.

"Of course I findt some," said Tailor Vertz indignantly. "I didn't I tells you I foundt a pranch of vitch-villow?" Then, in a reproachful manner, "I didn't tinks you wouldn't peliefe me—me, as always tells you de trut'. Nefer mind. I goes to somepody else and gets a quarter of a tollar—somepodies as tinks I'm honest."

"Of course we think you're honest," spoke up Billy. "If I had a quarter of a dollar I'd lend it to you. I've only got a levy. How much have you got, Ned?"

"Only a fip. Maybe I can get another from Aunt Catherine, though."

"Very vells," said the little man, climbing rather hastily back on the bench, for he thought he heard his wife coming—"very vells; put pring de quarter to-night, else I get it from somepodies."

The boys were all excitement and interest. They laid out so many plans for the spending of their wealth—when they should get it—and built so many castles in the air, that they wound themselves up to a thorough pitch of enthusiasm. That night they brought the tailor the quarter of a dollar. He pocketed the money, made an appointment with them for the next night to go treasure-hunting, and, after they were gone, melted some lead and poured it into a hole in the willow wand for the sake of appearances.

The next night the three met at a paling fence at the foot of Stalcop's lot. The tailor brought his magic wand, Billy Shallcross a lantern, and Ned Springer a crowbar for turning over the stones.

As the three walked along Tailor Vertz beguiled the way with stories of the departed Swede, and how his ghost still haunted the ruins—how it was apt to appear to treasure-hunters, laying its grisly hand upon them at the very moment of finding the sought-for treasure—until the very hearts of his listeners quaked with dread. Probably they would

willingly have sacrificed their hopes of treasure and turned back, but neither of them liked to propose such a measure. The lantern cast a ghostly flitting light on the fence-posts and trees as they walked along, and so drew near the ruined house, the chimney of which stood black against the sky.

"Now dere is von tings to remember," said Tailor Vertz, as they stood on the shapeless pile of stones that marked the ruin. He spoke impressively. "Now dere is von tings to remember. From de moment de stick pegins to p'int, you mustn't speak von vord, for shoost as soon as you do—poof!—de magics all goes out of de stick, de silfer turns into lead, and de treasure all melt like ice on a hot stove. If you see a ghost, den mind, shoost don't pay no notice to him, but go on vorkings and say nodings. Are you ready?"

"Suppose you take the crowbar, and I'll hold the lantern," said Billy.

"No; I've carried it all the way, and I'm tired," said Ned.

They both thought there was less danger from the ghost to the one that held the lantern than to the one that laid a hand on his buried treasure. However, it was finally determined that Ned should begin and work until he was tired, and then Billy should take a turn. The tailor stepped forward, holding the wand by the middle between his finger and thumb. In this way the slightest movement of the fingers would direct it. The boys watched him with the most intense interest. The willow wand moved slowly this way and that, and finally pointed toward a great beam that reached across the chimney just over the fireplace, thus indicating it as the place where a treasure must be. The boys approached cautiously, Billy holding the lantern and Ned firmly grasping the crowbar, both wrought up to a high pitch of nervous excitement, while the tailor stood a little back from them. It was a hopeless-looking piece of work for two boys to remove such a beam, so imbedded in the stone and mortar, and probably that was why the tailor had selected it. Ned struck the crowbar between the stones just under the beam, but it was a quarter of an hour's job

to loosen the first stone, which was very large ; but finally it came, and then another. Then Ned, whose face was beaded with perspiration, handed the crowbar to Billy. By this time they were beginning to regain their courage. Billy examined the chimney carefully, and, seeing a stone looser than the rest just over the beam, determined to begin the attack in that quarter ; so he struck the crowbar between that stone and the next, and began to prize. In the meantime Tailor Vertz had grown tired and determined to hasten matters, accordingly, just as the stone was loosening, he gave an unearthly groan

“What’s that?” cried Billy, and let go of the crowbar.

It fell clanking on the stones, and with it fell the stone he was loosening. The groan and the noise of the falling of the crowbar and the stone frightened Ned so that he dropped the lantern, and the boys, leaping over the pile of stones, fled up the road like frightened deer, closely followed by the tailor, who was scarcely less frightened than they were. At length they stopped and stood panting about a hundred yards up the road.

“Ach! mein Himmel!” cried Tailor Vertz, stamping his foot, “what you speak for? You have shpoilt all de magic of de witch willow. Vy did you not hold your tongue?”

“Did you hear that groan?” said Billy in an awful voice.

“It must have been the ghost,” said Ned. Then, in a very loud voice, “I don’t want the money, anyhow,” cried he.

“But you dropped father’s lintern back there.”

“Well, you dropped my father’s crowbar. It was you that scared me, dropping it, so you ought to go back for it.”

Finally they concluded that all three should go, for company’s sake.

They approached the spot very cautiously, the tailor, who had no further reason for frightening them, encouraging them to proceed, but himself keeping a little back, as he was secretly much afraid of ghosts. Luckily for their fears, the candle in the lantern had not gone out, but had burned as it fell, guttering the tallow and running it over the glass of

the lantern. Billy picked it up, and the light flashed out more brightly. Ned also picked up his crowbar, and they turned to leave, when Billy cast a glance at the hole whence the stone he had been working at had fallen.

"Stop," he cried suddenly. "What's this?"

"What's what?" said Ned.

"There's something in there."

"Dere? where?" said the tailor, pressing forward.

They all three looked in the hole; then Billy thrust in his hand and drew out a small wooden box. It was crumbling with dry-rot, and without much effort he broke off the lid with his fingers. The boys could scarcely believe their eyes. Ned sprang from the ground and gave a shout. The box was full of money. They were chiefly copper coins and small silver pieces; still, it was a treasure to the boys.

All this time Tailor Vertz had been standing with staring eyes and open mouth. He was amazed, thunderstruck, dumfounded, that he who had been deceiving the boys with juggling tricks should have actually showed them a real treasure. All of a sudden it came over him with a rush that he had deliberately led the boys to this spot and placed their very hands, as it were, upon all this money. He felt as though it had been taken from his own pocket, and burst out in a sudden torrent of words, scolding and stamping his feet in such a way that the boys stood amazed.

"What's the matter?" they cried.

"Vat's de matter?" shouted the tailor, beating his breast—"vat's de matter? Oh, Vertz! you fool! you fool! Oh, if I'd only known it was dere!—if I'd only known it was dere! 'To go empty it out of my pockets into yours! Bah! I might er had it all myself."

"But didn't you know it was there? Didn't the witch-willow tell you so?" said Billy.

"Vitch-villow! Oh, you yank! vat's a vitch-villow but to fool such tunces as you?"

"Then you were only fooling us, were you?" said Billy.

The tailor began to cool down somewhat at that, and

entered on a long explanation, in which he got very much involved.

"All very well," said Billy; "but tell us now, up and down, fair and square, did you know anything about the money being there?"

The little tailor looked at him doubtfully for a while.

"Vell," said he hesitatingly, "no-o, I didn't, and dat's de trut'."

Both boys burst into a laugh.

"Well," said Billy, "share and share alike, anyhow; that's fair."

However, they deducted the quarter-dollar from Tailor Vertz's share. Billy's share was six dollars and twenty-three cents, Ned's six dollars and twenty-two cents, and Tailor Vertz's five dollars and ninety-seven cents, with which he expressed himself perfectly satisfied.

For ever after this adventure Dutch Dolly's husband was more careful about telling the boys of the mysteries of his art; and when he would get on the subject, Billy was apt to slyly remind him of the magic wand.

A STORY OF THE COLOSSEUM.

BY MRS. LIZZIE W. CHAMPNEY.

IN the days of the Emperor Caracalla the Colosseum had ceased to be used for terrible conflicts between man and beast. But the young student Valentinian could not forget that eighty thousand spectators at a time had looked down from its seats, only a few years before, to see Christian martyrs given to the lions to be torn in pieces.

And Valentinian was a Christian. The persecutions had ceased. No more cruel Emperor than Caracalla had ever occupied the throne of Rome; but his cruelty found its victims in his own family and among his political enemies, and the Christians were overlooked and forgotten. Even Caracalla may have been sick of the blood spilled in assassinations, executions, and battle; and so, as a mere change of scene, ordered that the sports at the Colosseum should be of a bloodless character. At any rate, chariot races were now the vogue, the population of Rome were now all "horsey" men, and betting was the popular way of gaining or losing their fortunes.

The Emperor, as reigning over and above all like the air, chose white to mark his horses; the steeds of the soldiers were designated by red badges and trappings—red, the appropriate colour of Mars, of blood and flame; the sailors of course chose blue; and the landed proprietors, farmers, citizens, etc., grouped under green. When the enthusiasm extended thus to all classes, it was impossible that Valentinian should not feel it too. He was a soldier's son, and though he felt that it would be a crime even to enter the building in which the martyrs had been murdered, he could not repress

a throb of exultation when the scarlet-spangled horses were led out with shoutings as victors in the race.

Valentinian loved a fine horse, and, boy though he was, he owned one that had long been the envy and admiration of the different racing fraternities of Rome. Those who knew the animal's history did not wonder that Valentinian and his mother, the stately lady Placidia, had refused a noble's ransom for the magnificent creature. It was the beginning of the warm season, and Placidia had removed to her summer villa in shady Præneste. Valentinian still remained in Rome to prosecute his studies, but in the cool of the evening the youth would frequently drive out to see his mother, and the horse on every such visit was certain of being decorated with garlands by the fair hand of its mistress. On one of these occasions Rufinus accompanied his friend. Valentinian knew that the visit was not prompted by any fondness for his mother, for the lady Placidia did not regard Rufinus as a sufficiently refined companion for her son, and the dislike was mutual. He gave Rufinus credit for a feeling of good-fellowship toward himself, and for an appreciation of a moonlight ride to Rome. But Rufinus had a deeper motive on this occasion; he had determined to persuade Valentinian to join in the races, and he thought wisely that the long, solitary ride would give him a good opportunity for persuasion. He began skilfully by praising his friend's horse, and then spoke with some surprise of the affection that Placidia lavished upon it.

Valentinian replied that Carus deserved all the love and distinction that he received, for he was indeed a hero; and then he told how as a war-horse he had followed the Roman standards with honour throughout all the late disastrous campaign in Britain, and though he had fled with the legions from the battle on the river Carun, where Fingal and his Caledonian troops sang their exultant chant of victory in the ears of the cowardly Caracalla, it was not his fault, for he was only a horse. When Carus had felt his master, Valentinian's father, fall wounded upon his neck, the feeble

hands entwined in his mane, and the warm life-blood bathing his glossy side, the faithful animal, who until then had rushed on inflamed with all the fury of conflict, joined the general retreat, and paced swiftly but carefully from the battle-field. The Captain of the Legion, whose stiffening fingers were tangled in Carus's mane, did not hear the loud boast of the Britons, and when Carus knelt at the door of his tent, and other soldiers of the great "King of the World" (as Ossian calls the Roman Emperor) lifted the rider from the steed, the Roman heart had poured out all its blood on British soil; the brave Centurion was dead.

At the death of his father, the Emperor Severus, Caracalla gave up the war in Britain, and, impatient to assume his new dignities, hurried back to Rome. The war-horse Carus was brought back too, and entered the imperial city marching riderless at the head of its dead master's troop. As the army approached the gates of Rome, the broad imperial highway became more and more crowded. The return of the army was known, and the citizens of Rome, small and great, swarmed out in vehicles, on horses, or on foot, soldiers and slaves, the aristocracy and the beggars, old families of Rome and foreigners.

Painfully the army forced its way through the surging crowd, attending Caracalla, who so little deserved this enthusiastic welcome, to the porch of the imperial palace — "the house of Caesar." Then the cohorts, with the exception of the imperial body-guard, returned to the great Prætorian camp outside the city walls. One knight, a member of the Equites that the master of Carus had so lately commanded, led the Centurion's horse to the aristocratic street of the Carinæ, which ran along the slope of the Esquiline Hill, until he reached a house whose portal was decorated with laurel, and where, from the swarms of entering guests, pastry-cooks, and musicians, one might judge a feast was in progress. As the knight paused at the door, a boy bounded into the street and sprang upon the back of the war-horse, lavishing upon the noble creature the most

eager caresses. At the same moment a stately Roman matron appeared at the door, and greeted the knight, while a glad eager light shone in her eyes.

"Welcome, my good Galerius," said the lady. "Where is my husband? Is he detained at the palace with the young Emperor?"

"Nay, madam," replied the knight gravely, "thy husband was happy in knowing no emperor but Severus."

Then the unhappy lady knew that her husband would never come to the welcoming feast which she had prepared, and the young Valentinian slipped from his father's horse to hide the tears which would come, but which he as a Roman felt were womanish and shameful.

Rufinus, though a mere cub of a young man, with very little susceptibility, seemed touched by this story. "Where did your father get Carus?" he asked. "He is certainly not of the common Italian breed, neither does he resemble the light, swift African barbs."

"No," replied Valentinian. "He is a much heavier and more powerful animal. My father captured him from a Goth at the battle of Lyons, where his own horse had been killed under him. Some of our Roman jockeys affect to despise the Gothic horses as big and lumpish, but they are swift."

"They are the best horses for chariots," replied Rufinus. "The Equites have one set of four which they will enter for the next race. They are black as night, like Carus there, and are, so far as I know, the only other Gothic horses in Rome. How fine they will look in their red trappings! They are sure of winning. I have invested all my ready money in bets, and I shall quadruple them all."

A few days later the following note was handed to Valentinian :—

"LOVED VALENTINIAN,—I am ruined. The races are lost beforehand. One of the Gothic horses has fallen lame. The team is pledged for the race; we can only supply its place

with a Roman beast, for we know not of another Gothic horse to be obtained in Rome, and there is no time to send to the provinces, else would we do it, for the entire military order are interested; some, like myself, have staked their all, and now see ruin stare them in the face. We have sent in a petition, through the Empress Julia, to have the races postponed until we can obtain another horse from Gaul, but there is very little hope.

"*Later.*—The Emperor has refused to postpone the races; he sees here an opportunity to curb the rising power of the army, which he has long feared. If many are in my desperate condition, the tyrant may tremble. Does he not know that in Rome it is the army that creates or dethrones the Emperor? Meantime I am lost. Farewell. Thy frantic

"RUFINUS."

A wave of pity swept across Valentinian's compassionate heart, and he sat down to write a hopeful, encouraging letter to Rufinus. When he had finished it, a sentence from a letter written to the Roman and other Churches, when persecution had scattered the members of the first Christian Church at Jerusalem, flashed through his mind: "If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful, what doth it profit?" Valentinian pushed the letter from him impatiently. How could he give Rufinus the things which were needful? He could not pay his betting debts and those of the whole army. "What am I to do?" he asked aloud, and as an answer a gentle neigh floated up from Carus's stable. If he lent his horse to the military club, the reds would probably gain the race. What could be plainer? He would have nothing to do with bets and bribes; he would not even see the race; surely every brotherly and Christian instinct called upon him to rescue his friend's honour and fortune, and that of the class to which his father had belonged. Was it because he was so very sure of his duty that he did not drive out and consult his mother? Perhaps, instead, it was a haunting suspicion that she might

not consider this a call of duty. He gave himself no time to doubt, or even to think, but went at once to the Prætorian Prefect with his offer.

Carus was accepted, the Prefect in his first burst of gratitude offering Valentinian an important post in the army. This the youth declined; his education had another aim, and he knew that it would break his mother's heart to see him a soldier.

The morning of the races dawned at last. Valentinian had determined not to attend them, and when Rufinus came with a band of gay young knights, he refused to see them. From his window he could see the populace flocking toward the Colosseum; and finding at last that he could not read, he determined to take a walk to the suburbs. As he passed over the Palatine Hill, he turned to enjoy the beautiful prospect—"with palaces adorned, porches and theatres, baths, aqueducts, statues and trophies, and triumphal arcs." Alas! the most prominent object of all was the "gladiators' bloody circus," just at the foot of the hill; and, forgetting all his resolutions, he hurried to it, and entered among the last.

He was so late that he could not find a seat in the circle near the front, where he properly belonged, and he mounted to the upper tiers, where he sat, crowded by such companions as beggars and slaves. He looked for the first time upon the place where so many martyrs had poured out their lives for their faith. He could just make out the openings, closed with gratings, through which the wild beasts had been admitted.

His thoughts were snatched suddenly from the martyrs and the past. At the extreme left of the arena stood four four-horse chariots ready for the start. He could tell the colours of the horses, but not, at this distance, that of the trappings which distinguished the class to which they belonged. The four milk-white steeds prancing impatiently before the gilded car must be the Emperor's, and now, as the driver mounts and takes the reins, the roar of applause that circles around the seats tells that Caracalla is to drive in person. There are four bay horses; these he knows have been imported from Asia by the sailors' club; but the horses attached to both of

the remaining chariots are black, and he cannot tell which belongs to the land-holders and which to the soldiers. The signal for the start is given. The horses will be going away from him for the first quarter of the race, then they will approach him for half the distance. They keep nearly the same pace, and it seems to him, at this distance, a very slow one. Ah ! one chariot has fallen behind ; it stopped suddenly ; there must have been some accident. One of his neighbours suggests that a wheel has come off ; but now they cannot even tell the colour of the horses. The other three chariots are approaching, but how slowly ! Surely, if he here driving Carus there, he could outstrip them all. Nearer, nearer, and now he knows that the chariots just abreast are drawn, the one by black and the other by white horses. The chariot gradually falling behind is drawn by black horses too.

Now the two that are leading the way are just in front of him, and Va'entinian realises that they are really tearing along at a fearful rate. It is only the distance which made them appear to move slowly. The Emperor is bending far forward, lashing his white coursers terribly. He is driving them across the track of the blacks at his side, and is striving to gain the inside of the track. What a cloud of dust ! He can make out nothing but a general scramble. Another loud roar echoes from the massive walls. What a frantic waving of scarves, and eager movement on the seats below ! Valentinian cannot understand it at all, and a slave at his side explains that Caracalla has cut across the track of the other chariot, and overturned it on his way. Yes, there he emerges from the whirlpool of dust, and sweeps swiftly along alone toward the goal.

No, not alone, for though one set of black horses lie kicking and struggling upon the sand in inextricable confusion, the exploit has consumed time, and the other set of blacks come skimming serenely along, their driver standing erect and motionless as a statue, the steeds gaining, gaining upon the Emperor without any apparent effort. The imperial jockey looks behind him, and again leans forward and lashes his own

horses more furiously : evidently he fears for the result. They are neck to neck now, and the goal is only a few yards off. The white horses are galloping frantically, but the steady pace of the blacks carries them ahead by more than three chariot lengths, and the race is won. And won by black horses. How the sun glares, for the awning does not extend over this part of the amphitheatre. If he could only tell whether Carus is one of the victorious four, or one of the four that are being led away after their ignominious tumble ! What a noisy hubbub ! The spectators are starting to their feet and leaving their seats. "I have lost !" "I have won !" shout the slaves around him. "How do you know whether you have lost or won ?" he shrieks. "Have you no eyes ?" bawls a sturdy Ethiopian ; "there is the colour of the winners," and Valentinian, at the end of the course, sees a flag displayed—a scarlet flag. As he hurries down the staircases a soldier's hand is clapped upon his shoulder, other soldiers seize his legs, and he is lifted to a seat upon their shield, and borne unwillingly, in the midst of loud acclamations, to the course. His giddy brain reels with all this excitement : if he can only once get Carus and lead him away, he will never, never enter this place again. What is this ?—a crowd of men about a fallen horse. Some one is wiping drops of blood from the animal's nostrils with a sponge ; there are more red drops upon his foam-flecked sides—no, they are only the scarlet spangles. "Sunstroke ?" asks one of the men. "Perhaps so," replies the man with the sponge. "He wasn't used to racing," remarks the driver ; "I had to hold him in all the way, and when we stopped, he just dropped : lucky thing he didn't do it two minutes before."

Valentinian pushed them all aside, and fell in an agony of grief upon the neck of the dead horse. It was Carus. There is little left to tell. Valentinian's mother did not mourn over the death of the horse as much as her son had feared. "He has died in a good cause," she said, "if he has taught you the evils of racing and betting. Oh that all the youths of Rome might learn the same lesson !"

A LEAP IN THE DARK.

BY BENJAMIN LANDER.

IN May, 1779, "The Patriot Miller," Demarest, owned and operated the grist-mill that still stands, though abandoned and in a ruinous condition, near Demarest, New Jersey. In the house about one hundred yards away the sturdy miller lived with his two sons and two daughters, within full view of the shadowy woods sweeping up the western slope of the Hudson Palisades.

At midnight on the eleventh day of that month of May the miller was awakened by sounds that he had, for many a night, expected to rouse him.

He seized his musket, called hastily his sons Cornelius and Hancomb, and, followed by them, ran quickly downstairs and out at the back door. This was the third time they had been thus roused to repel the attempts of marauding Royalists to steal their horses.

This time they were too late to save the animals. The party of marauders had already led two fine horses from the barn, and were in the saddle again when the miller and his sons arrived.

The two parties perceived each other at the same moment, and fired on the instant. Demarest and his sons were unhurt, but a yell from one of the raiding party showed that he was struck; but they all rode away at the top of their speed, leaving the miller and his sons alone.

Cornelius Demarest was twenty, Hancomb eighteen years of age; both were tall and strong. Their mother was dead, and they were principally solicitous for their young sisters, May and Lucy.

The miller had made himself highly obnoxious to the British and Tories by frequently furnishing supplies of meal and flour to Washington's army, encamped at the little village of Tappan, a few miles away.

They expected a return of the party, and soon they were visited again. Shortly after nightfall on the second day after their encounter Mr. Demarest went to the spring not far from the house to fetch water.

The boys heard a shout from their father, and rushed out at the door. The mill was on fire. They could see figures moving about in the light of the fire.

"They've got father prisoner! There he is!" said Hancomb, pointing to a group where a struggle was going on.

At that moment there were two quick reports of musket-shots, and both the boys fell to the ground and lay prone on the grass not far from the door.

May and Lucy ran to the door, where they were confronted by a party of troopers. The leader seized May by the arm, and pointed with a fierce gesture down the sloping lawn.

"Out of this! Your brothers are there. They've ground their last grist."

The party rushed in to complete the work of robbery and destruction. Only one man on guard remained at the front of the house.

Lucy and May ran to the bank where their brothers lay. Trembling with fear, they listened to discover if their hearts were still beating, and were overjoyed to find that both were still alive. It was but the work of a few moments to bring Hancomb back to consciousness, for a bullet had barely grazed his skull.

As soon as he rose to his feet the duty of rescuing his father came back to his mind.

"Stay here and keep quiet," he said. "I'm off."

Hancomb leaped the low stone wall at the base of the slope, and crept along in its shadow till he reached the granary, beneath which were several partially decayed pumpkins. He selected the hardest and moved toward the sentry, keeping

in the dark shadow of a group of pines. The noise of the marauders in the house enabled him to approach within a few feet of the guard, who was intently observing the road.

Carefully poising the pumpkin, Hancomb sent it straight at the head of the Tory on guard. It struck true to the mark, broke into a dozen pieces, and laid the trooper senseless upon the grass.

Hancomb dragged the stunned man within the shadows of the pines, bound him with a halter strap, and gagged him with his own neckerchief as soon as he began to recover breath. Then the boy stripped the trooper of his coat, boots and accoutrements, and put them on.

Having secured the hat and musket of his fallen foe, Hancomb rushed to the door to personate the sentry. He shouted :

“Run for your horses ! There’s a rescue party coming !”

The men who were sacking the house instantly ran out in panic, leaped the fence, and rushed down the road to where their companions and horses were concealed.

With no definite plan, but trusting to some favouring opportunity to assist his father to escape, Hancomb was the first to reach the men with the horses. He jumped upon the nearest horse, and seized the bridle of that upon which his father sat, gagged and bound.

“Forward !” shouted the captain. “Prisoner to the front.”

Away they swept down the dark highway toward the city of New York.

They had gone but a short distance when the captain spurred his horse to the side of the miller, and seized the bridle opposite to the side upon which Hancomb rode. A fear that he was discovered thrilled through the boy.

“Here, you !” said the captain. “See that you keep a tight hold on this bridle, and watch the prisoner’s hands. If we are overtaken, shoot him on the spot rather than let him escape.”

"Let me alone for that," growled Hancomb, in a disguised voice. "I'd like to see the corn-husking rebel escape!"

With no suspicion of the hidden meaning in the supposed trooper's reply, the officer, satisfied that the prisoner had a zealous guardian, dropped the bridle, and with a growl at the moon, which was just breaking through the clouds, rode forward.

Hancomb now felt secure from discovery as long as the general panic continued. He pretended to examine the miller's bound wrists, and repeated loudly what he had replied to the captain: "I'd like to see you escape!"

The prisoner turned toward his brave son, and the flash of recognition shone in his eye. But he said nothing.

Fast and furious they sped away, the sparks from the horses' hoofs flashing like a flight of tiny meteors in the darkness. Now and then, as they scurried past a road-side farm-house, a white-robed figure would be seen at a window, wondering what mischief was abroad.

At the top of a hill the leader called a halt, to listen. But no sound of pursuit was heard.

"We've shaken them off," said the captain, with glee. "Forward!"

In the confusion of the few moments' halt, Hancomb had leaped to the ground, put down his head to avoid recognition, and busied himself with the trappings of his horse. At the word "Forward!" he rose, and the keen blade of his knife cut through the rope binding the captive's hands. At the same time he saw that his father bestrode one of the stolen horses.

Hancomb's position was becoming more hazardous. Now the leader, feeling secure from pursuit, advanced to the head of the party.

By adroit manœuvring the Demarests had dropped somewhat to the rear, when a weird sound—now faint, now deep and hoarse—rose above the hoof-beats. It was familiar to the patriots, but appalling to the troopers.

They drew rein and stood silently listening in a confused and widely separated group.

Now they were near where stands the present village of Tenaally, near a deep forest-lined gorge, in which there is a succession of waterfalls called the "Caulders," leading up to the Hudson Palisades. Hancomb saw that the opportunity for escape had come. The moon was now hidden, and it was quite dark.

"Now!" Hancomb whispered.

They had managed to face up the road. The miller lashed his horse with his belt-strap, and dashed forward. The captain was between him and liberty, but only for an instant, for a blow from the miller's brawny fist sent the leader reeling from his saddle.

There was a chorus of yells from the astonished group of troopers.

"After him, boys!" shouted the sergeant. "He's broken the captain's head. Take him alive, and we'll roast him for this!"

"I'll take him alive, or die in the attempt!" exclaimed Hancomb. And before those who were not assisting their leader could recover from the sudden confusion, he galloped after the fugitive.

Soon he was close behind his father. The miller, who had snatched off the gag, turned to his son.

"Hancomb," said he, "we never can keep up this pace; and if we do they will shoot us when we pass back near them round the bend in the road ahead. We must take to the marshes till the troopers pass, then climb the slope to the old Indian trail on the top of the Palisades."

"Yes; it's our only chance. They're after us."

As the moon broke through the clouds, the crack of a pistol mingled with the hoof-beats. Hancomb was doubtless suspected.

Another shot! The hat of the young patriot rolled in the dust. A shout went up from the troopers as he was seen to fall forward, as though struck by the bullet. But he had merely thrown himself upon the horse's neck to shield himself as much as possible.

Next moment the bend in the road was passed.

Checking the speed of the horses, the miller and his son leaped to the ground just as their pursuers swept round the curve.

To the left of the road were a few straggling trees, with a moonlit meadow beyond, and then the marshes. To the right was a stream lined with rushes.

The hillside was echoing to the pursuers' exultant yells, when the Demarests leaped across the road to the right, and were lost to view. The troopers dismounted with a great deal of uproar. The captain's order to beat the banks of the stream could be heard above the tumult.

"Keep close behind me, and in the shadow of the rushes," said the miller.

"But the rushes end a little way ahead. What shall we do then?"

"Strike up the hillside. It is the only thing we can do."

They soon reached a mass of low, thick-set bushes, extending for some distance up the side of the hill. From this point they must cross a wide, open space in order to reach the woods.

They had hardly cleared a third of the distance when a fierce yell showed that they were discovered. On they went, over the thin grass and the smooth, outcropping rocks.

They had nearly reached the edge of the wood when a volley was fired. Then came a shout of triumph as Hancome was seen to fall.

"Son, are you hurt?" asked the miller.

"Not a scratch, father. I stepped into a hole. We'll give 'em the slip yet. Thank God, we have reached the woods. But see! they're coming."

"Yes. It won't do to take the trail. We must get down the rocks to the river, if we can."

After running a few rods homeward they turned east toward the Palisades.

This lofty, picturesque wall of igneous rock, many miles in length, is familiar enough as seen from the Hudson River

For almost its entire length its top is a narrow, forest-grown plateau, which descends at the west in irregular slopes to the Hackensack Valley.

The basaltic formation forms groups of huge columns, whose flat upper surfaces sometimes rise one above another, like steps cut in the rocks. Here and there the giant ridge is indented by steep slopes, clothed with a stunted growth of bushes and small trees.

Now a noisy confusion of voices came rolling through the forest. Hancomb, pausing for an instant, heard the command given to search the surrounding underbush where he had fallen. The troopers doubtless expected to find him, wounded, and the miller with him.

They soon found they were approaching the verge of the vast escarpment, at the base of which, four hundred feet below them, rolled the Hudson.

"That was a lucky fall of mine," said Hancomb. "It has thrown them off the scent."

"Yes; but we are not out of the wood yet, my boy. Caution's the word. Keep in the shadows, and be silent."

"Why not go down the first slope we come to, and work up the river?"

"We would break our necks. It's dangerous enough in daylight—doubly so with the cliff in a deep shadow like this. No, that will never do. We'll strike straight for home. I believe we have shaken off the enemy. No! Good heavens! They've got a dog on the trail!"

The wind brought to their ears the baying of a hound, and the sound was rapidly approaching them.

To retrace their steps meant capture. At their right was the precipitous wall of the Palisades. From the left the baying of the dog sounded nearer and nearer. Before them stretched an open, moonlit glade, a hundred yards and more in width. They sped forward into the telltale moonlight. Scarcely had they left the shadow of the trees when a party of their pursuers leaped from the woods in hot pursuit.

Not a shot was fired. It was evident that the intention was

to capture the fugitives alive. Weary from their exertions, the Denmarests were rapidly gained upon.

Hancomb was just behind his father. Suddenly he turned to the right, and sped toward the brink of the frightful precipice a hundred yards away.

Puzzled by this unaccountable movement, the pursuers slackened their speed. Some ran cautiously in the direction the boy had taken. The hound led the advance.

For a moment the form of the young hero stood out against the eastern sky. Then after one glance backward, and a longer, steadier look into the gulf before him, he leaped into the air and was gone.

Next moment the hound, unable to stop his speed, shot forward with a cry almost human, into the dark abyss. There was a faint rattle of dislodged *débris*, and all was still.

The spectators, their hot blood chilled by this supreme act, gathered upon the rocky verge and held brief council before they turned and moved slowly up the glade.

In the meantime the miller, thinking Hancomb not far behind him, had plunged into the dark shadows of the forest. Missing the sound of his son's course through the bushes, the father turned and found himself alone. He had heard no outcry, no shot. Where were Hancomb and the hound!

The miller retraced his steps with the intention of going to his son's rescue, at the risk of his own life. He saw through the trees the excited group peering over the rocky verge of the cliff. He saw the men turn and disappear in the forest. Then all the world was dark with horror to the patriot father.

When he looked again the glade was vacant, and nothing was heard save the rustle of the leaves. A white cloud swept into the halo of the moon; to the father's half-crazed fancy it seemed like the ascending spirit of his son.

The miller crept toward the precipice, looked down into the awful darkness and moaned,—

“Hancomb! O Hancomb!”

The words had hardly died away when a whisper came up from below, thrilling the already overwrought nerves of the

listener. Then he heard a scraping noise, and a black head rose above the edge of the cliff.

"All right, father," Hancomb whispered. "Lend a hand."

The revulsion of feeling in the miller almost sent him over the brink, but in another moment the brave boy was standing beside him. Tears stood in the old man's eyes as he folded his arms around his son.

"Tell me, Hancomb, how did you dodge 'em, and how did you get here?"

"Well, you see, father, when we had nearly reached the woods across the glade, I thought that if I could get rid of the dog there would be some chance of escape."

"Yes; but there was the chance of being shot."

"Well, I didn't think of that. I thought if the dog followed closely he might not be able to stop himself on the smooth rocks; and that was just what happened. He was close at my heels. I stopped a second or two on the edge, and he came on faster than ever. I could see the narrow upper surface of a column, three or four feet below, and I jumped for it.

"There I thought I was gone, for a large piece of rock gave way beneath me just as the dog bounded over my head. But I hung on with my hands, and then let myself down to the next ledge, about four feet lower. There I found a fissure and crept into it. The Tories could not see me.

"I heard them consulting. They said they had had revenge enough, and one of us was in a grave four hundred feet deep; and they had no dog to find you. So I knew they were giving up the pursuit."

The saffron glow of morning was mantling the east as the Demarests, standing upon a rocky eminence, looked down upon their hillside farm. The wind had died away, and in the still air columns of blue smoke rose from their ruined home. But the mill had been saved, and there the sisters were found, nursing their wounded brother.

A substantial mansion rose on the site of the burned house, and the old mill furnished many a goodly store of flour and meal to Washington's army at Tappan.

SCIIMITZ, THE ENGRAVER.

A TRUE STORY.

PROFESSOR KRAHE, superintendent of the Gallery of Paintings in the city of Dusseldorf, on the Rhine, was seated one morning in his study, when a servant informed him that a young man wished to see him.

"Show him in," said the professor.

Accordingly, in a few minutes a lad of seventeen or eighteen years of age was introduced by the servant into the study.

Seeing the dress of his visitor to be that of a baker, the professor imagined him to have brought a bread-bill, and was about to refer the matter to his lady when something striking in the youth's countenance and manner made him hesitate until the business was announced.

When apparently about to speak, however the lad hesitated and cast his eyes on the ground.

"What is it you wish with me, my lad?" said Krahe in a kind tone.

"I have a book, sir," replied the youth, drawing one at the same time from his breast, "which I wish you to look at, and to—to buy, if it should please you."

The professor took the proffered book into his hands, and found it to be an illuminated prayer-book, or one ornamented, according to the ancient fashion, with a number of coloured figures and engravings.

The skill of the examiner told him at once that the book was one copy of an edition which the Elector Clement Augustus of Cologne had ordered to be thrown off, and which

had become very scarce and valuable. But there was more in the work before him than the professor imagined.

"Where did you procure this, my lad?" said he to the young baker.

"It is a copy from one which was borrowed," said the youth, looking down.

"Not an original?" said the professor, turning over the leave, again. "And by whom was this copy executed?"

The youth blushed modestly as he replied, "By myself."

Krahe gazed on the lad with surprise, and then, turning to a bookcase, took down an original volume of the Elector's edition, with which he compared the copy brought by the baker's boy. The difference was scarcely distinguishable.

"Young man," exclaimed the professor, "why do you pursue the trade which your dress betokens when you are so well fitted to succeed in a much higher one?"

The youth replied that it was his perpetual, his dearest wish, but that his father, having a numerous family, could not afford the expense of suitable instruction.

"I knew your love of art, and this emboldened me to make an application to you, in the hope that you might purchase the copy and honour me with your counsel and assistance."

The modesty and cultivation apparent in the young baker's manner charmed the superintendent of paintings and confirmed the impression made by the beautiful prayer-book.

"Call on me here to-morrow without fail," said the professor emphatically, grasping the youth's hand and shaking it warmly as he led him to the door.

Early next morning M. Krahe was on his way to the house of a friend who resided some miles from Dusseldorf. This gentleman was blessed with abundant wealth, much of which he generously expended in an enlightened patronage of the fine arts and their cultivators. Krahe knew this well, and told him the story of the baker's lad, showing at the same time the illuminated prayer-book.

The gentleman was astonished and delighted with the style of the engraving.

"What can I do to assist this wonderful boy?"

This was the question the professor wished and anticipated.

"Lend him two hundred crowns to continue his studies, and I have no doubt but he will become one of the most distinguished engravers of the day. And I myself will be his security for the repayment."

"He shall have three hundred crowns," said the gentleman, "and I will have no security."

Pleased with his success, the professor returned to Dusseldorf.

Young Schmitz, as the baker's lad was named, could have fallen at the feet of M. Krahe when the latter produced the means of liberating him from the oven and of pursuing his favourite studies. Under the professor's auspices Schmitz was soon prosecuting the sciences of geometry and drawing, besides storing his mind with other elements of a liberal education.

For two years he continued his studies assiduously in Dusseldorf, and made such rapid progress that Professor Krahe saw the place could afford his *protégé* no further instruction, and advised him to proceed to Paris.

Schmitz, of course, followed his benefactor's advice. With a letter of introduction to M. Willes, a celebrated engraver in the French metropolis, and the remains of his well-economised store of money, he took his leave for the time of Dusseldorf, leaving his heart behind him, without knowing whether or not it would be taken care of till his return. More of this, however, hereafter.

Schmitz, now a fine-looking young man of twenty, accomplished his journey to Paris in safety; but so anxious had he been to live frugally by the way that he had done his constitution injury, and he fell ill immediately on his arrival.

He got himself conveyed to a monastery, where every attention was paid to him. Incidental expenses, nevertheless, during his long-continued illness swallowed up the whole of the money upon which he depended for the commencement of his studies. When he did at last issue from the monastery

restored to health, he was penniless, and his pride, or bashfulness, or perhaps a mixture of both, forbade his making an application to M. Willes in the character of an indigent beggar.

Poor Schmitz now wandered about the streets, musing on the unfortunate condition to which he was reduced and ignorant in what direction to turn for his daily bread. Accident determined his course.

One day he was met by two soldiers of the Swiss guard, one of whom gazed attentively at him, and exclaimed,—

“Friend, are you not a German?”

“I am.”

“What quarter do you come from?”

“From the neighbourhood of Dusseldorf,” was Schmitz’s reply.

“You are my countryman,” said the soldier joyfully, and then inquired into his condition.

Schmitz told what had befallen him, and that, as he could not think of being troublesome to or dependent upon any one, he was in want of a livelihood.

The soldier advised him strongly to enlist in the guards, assuring him that he would have abundance of leisure time to prosecute any studies he liked.

After a little consideration, Schmitz, seeing no better course open to him, followed the soldier’s advice and enlisted for four years in the Swiss guard.

The captain who enlisted him was struck with his appearance, and inquired into his story.

This was the unexpected means of good to the new soldier, for the captain, shortly after, took him to M. Willes and introduced him to that eminent artist. The consequence was that every moment of leisure time which the service would permit was spent by Schmitz in pursuing the art of engraving under M. Willes, who appreciated his talents and was extremely kind to him.

Thus did the four years of soldiership pass agreeably away, and when they were ended the young man continued for two

years longer to study his art. He then returned to Dusseldorf, loaded with the most honourable attestations of his skill, industry, and probity.

Professor Krahe received his *protégé* with open arms, being equally delighted with his mental and scientific progress as with the improvement which a military life had made in his personal appearance. M. Krahe himself was the first to secure the professional services of Schmitz, engaging him to work in the cabinet. Every successive day his conduct endeared him more to the professor, who acquired for him a father's affection.

Two years passed away in this manner after Schmitz's return to Dusseldorf, when, one day, he was invited by the professor to a great entertainment to meet a party of friends.

Schmitz presented himself at the appointed hour at M. Krahe's, and found many persons assembled whom he knew and whose friendship he had gained. Seating himself by one of these, Schmitz began to converse with him. After a little discourse the gentleman cast his eyes to the top of the room and whispered to the young engraver,—

“How pale the professor's daughter looks! One would have thought Henrietta would have mustered a better colour for such an occasion as this.”

Had the speaker at the moment turned his eye upon the person he addressed, he would have seen a face grow in an instant much more pale than that which caused his remark. His words, indeed, had excited an extraordinary emotion in the heart of Schmitz. As soon as it subsided a little the latter asked his friend what he alluded to as distinguishing this occasion from others.

“What!” said the other, “do you not know that the stranger who is now at Henrietta's right hand has been for some years affianced to her and has come from his home—at a distance—to arrange the marriage? But, Schmitz! Good heavens! are you ill?”

“Yes,” muttered the artist in a choked voice; then, constraining himself into something like outward composure, he

whispered, "Assist me, for mercy's sake, to retire without observation. I am very ill."

His friend took him by the arm, and they succeeded in leaving the room without notice.

When they reached Schmitz's residence the latter begged his companion to return to the company, and to mention nothing further, if his—Schmitz's—absence should be observed, than that he felt a little unwell.

The gentleman, though suspicious that something lay under the matter, promised to do as the artist implored him to do.

Schmitz was left alone with his wretchedness—for very wretched he was. He had long loved the daughter of his benefactor with a passion of which he scarcely knew till now the force. Though he had never dared to hope for success and had always regarded her as far above him in every respect, yet the knowledge that she was to be united to another came upon him like a dreadful awaking from a dream. His eyes on this night closed not in sleep, and when he appeared in the professor's cabinet in the morning dejection was too deeply written on his countenance to escape that gentleman's notice.

"By the bye," said M. Krahe kindly, "you were unwell last night, we were told, Schmitz. I fear you are really very ill."

The poor artist burst into tears.

Startled and vexed at his condition, the professor inquired narrowly into the cause, and at last the young man confessed the truth.

"Have you ever intimated to my daughter the state of your affections?" said the professor after a pause, in which anxiety and sympathy were depicted on his features.

"Never," answered Schmitz with energy. "Not in the most distant manner. Could I have dared, humble as I am, to have spoken of love to the daughter of my patron and benefactor? I was contented to see her; but that satisfaction," continued he with a sigh, "I will not long have now."

The benevolent professor tried to soothe and comfort the youth; assured him of his affection—that he loved him as

his own child ; but counselled him to subdue his passion, as it would soon be wrong to indulge it.

Schmitz promised and strove to obey him. But the struggle was too much for his constitution. He fell ill, and the illness was destined to be a long one. When it first attacked him, as it was impossible to conceal from Henrietta the bodily state of one who had long been her friend and companion, Professor Krahe thought it best to tell her the whole truth at once, determining, if he found her now averse to fulfil the engagement, which had been entered into when she was very young, and before Schmitz's return to Dusseldorf, that he would take some means to break off the proposed match.

But Henrietta heard the intelligence of the young artist's passion merely with a sigh, and rose and left her father's presence. Her father did not know exactly what to think of the symptom. When he saw her again, however, he thought he could see that she had been weeping. He then endeavoured to discover the state of her mind ; but she put a stop to it by saying firmly,—

"Father, I am betrothed. Schmitz," she continued with a sigh, "has my pity, but duty and honour——"

She left the professor to conclude the sentence himself.

Love is not so harsh to his votaries as he is sometimes said to be. Henrietta's betrothed returned to his parents, and in his letters written afterwards to his mistress he let some hints escape him that his parents now started some objections to the match. Henrietta was eagle eyed. In an answer returned by next post she gave her lover perfect liberty to follow his own inclinations, renouncing every claim resulting from his promise. The result was that the gentleman accepted of the permission she gave to him.

No woman likes even the semblance of desertion ; but we will not say whether Henrietta felt glad or otherwise on this occasion. Suffice it to say that on the day on which her late lover's letter came she entered her father's study just when twilight was setting in.

"Well, my girl," said the professor, kissing her fondly when

she came in, "I have been idling for a half-hour, musing upon poor Schmitz. But I must have candles, and to my writing."

So saying, he stretched his hand to the bell; but Henrietta caught it, exclaiming,—

"Oh no, dear papa; it is too early for candles. You study too much; and I wish to speak with you."

"Well, my love, shall we not still be the better for lights?"

"No, no," said she, sitting down by his side. After a pause she began, "Papa, I know you love Schmitz——"

"I do," said the professor. "And would to Heaven you could, and did love him too, Henrietta!"

The young lady let her head fall on her father's shoulder as she replied,—

"I can—and do, papa. Every obstacle is removed, and Henrietta will be his, if she can promote his happiness."

The professor read the letter which his daughter gave to him and kissed her again and again with delight. It was not long ere the joyful father was by the side of the slowly recovering Schmitz and informed him of the change which had occurred.

The good news was like to have proved as fatal as his despair. But he recovered from his emotion, and ere long was led by his benefactor to the presence of Henrietta, one evening of whose company cheered and restored the artist to something like a new state of being.

But on the morning following this meeting, what was the surprise of Henrietta and her father to learn that Schmitz had left the town by daylight in a carriage with four horses, taking with him all his plates and drawings!

Poor Henrietta was thunderstruck. She had now surrendered her whole heart to the artist—but he was a maniac! What else could be the meaning of this conduct? The professor himself was in terror for the reason of his friend.

Meantime day after day passed, and no letter or intelligence of any kind arrived to quiet the dreadful anxiety under which they laboured.

On the ninth day, however, while Henrietta sat gazing from

the window in the direction in which he had departed, a carriage drove straight up to the professor's door, and Schmitz sprang out.

In a few moments Henrietta was in his arms, and he had not only quieted her fears, but replaced them with the deepest joy. He had gone to Munich and thrown himself at the feet of the Elector Palatine, had told his history, shown his work and certificates, and had moved the Elector so much by his tale that the Prince had put his services in requisition as an engraver, and had assigned to him a fixed salary of six hundred florins.

"Now," said Schmitz, when he had told his tale to his mistress and her father—"now am I more worthy—or at least more the equal—of my Henrietta."

Few who know anything of the history of Continental engravings are ignorant of the great merits in his art of the hero of this little story. The circumstances related here are in strict accordance with the truth.

AT DOTHEBOYS HALL

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

I.

MORNING.

"PAST seven, Nickleby," said Mr. Squeers.

"Has morning come already?" asked Nicholas, sitting up in bed.

"Ah! that it has," replied Squeers, "and ready iced too. Now, Nickleby, come; tumble up, will you?"

Nicholas "tumbled up" at once, and proceeded to dress himself by the light of the taper which Mr. Squeers carried in his hand.

"Here's a pretty go," said that gentleman; "the pump's froze."

"Indeed!" said Nicholas, not much interested in the intelligence.

"Yes," replied Squeers. "You can't wash yourself this morning."

"Not wash myself!" exclaimed Nicholas.

"No, not a bit of it," rejoined Squeers tartly. "So you must be content with giving yourself a dry polish till we break the ice in the well, and can get a bucketful out for the boys. Don't stand staring at me, but look sharp, will you?"

Offering no further observation, Nicholas huddled on his clothes. Squeers, meanwhile, opened the shutters and blew the candle out; when the voice of his amiable consort was heard in the passage, demanding admittance.

"Come in, my love," said Squeers.

Mrs. Squeers came in, still habited in the primitive night-jacket which had displayed the symmetry of her figure on the previous night.

"Drat the things," said the lady, opening the cupboard; "I can't find the school spoon anywhere."

"Never mind it, my dear," observed Squeers in a soothing manner; "it's of no consequence."

"No consequence! why, how you talk!" retorted Mrs. Squeers sharply; "isn't it brimstone morning?"

"I forgot, my dear," rejoined Squeers; "yes, it certainly is. We purify the boys' blood now and then, Nickleby."

"Purify fiddlesticks' ends," said his lady. "I don't think, young man, that we go to the expense of flower of brimstone and molasses just to purify them; because if you think we carry on the business in that way, you'll find yourself mistaken, and so I'll tell you plainly."

"My dear," said Squeers, frowning. "Hem!"

"Oh! nonsense," rejoined Mrs. Squeers. "If the young man comes to be a teacher here, let him understand, at once, that we don't want any foolery about the boys. They have the brimstone and treacle, partly because if they hadn't something or other in the way of medicine they'd be always ailing and giving a world of trouble, and partly because it spoils their appetites and comes cheaper than breakfast and dinner. So, it does them good and us good at the same time, and that's fair enough, I'm sure."

Having given this explanation, Mrs. Squeers put her hand into the closet and instituted a stricter search after the spoon, in which Mr. Squeers assisted.

A vast deal of searching and rummaging ensued, and, proving fruitless, Smike was called in, and pushed by Mrs. Squeers, and boxed by Mr. Squeers; which course of treatment brightening his intellect enabled him to suggest that possibly Mrs. Squeers might have the spoon in her pocket, as indeed turned out to be the case. As Mrs. Squeers had previously protested, however, that she was quite certain

she had not got it, Smike received another box on the ear for presuming to contradict his mistress, together with the promise of a sound thrashing if he were not more respectful in future; so that he took nothing very advantageous by his notion.

"A most invaluable woman that, Nickleby," said Squeers, when his consort had hurried away, pushing the drudge before her.

"Indeed, sir!" observed Nicholas.

"I don't know her equal," said Squeers; "I do not know her equal. That woman, Nickleby, is always the same—always the same bustling, lively, active, saving creetur that you see her now."

Nicholas sighed involuntarily at the thought of the agreeable domestic prospect thus opened to him; but Squeers was, fortunately, too much occupied with his own reflection to perceive it.

"It's my way to say, when I am up in London," continued Squeers, "that to them boys she is a mother. But she is more than a mother to them; ten times more. She does things for them boys, Nickleby, that I don't believe half the mothers going would do for their own sons."

"I should think they would not, sir," answered Nicholas.

Now, the fact was that both Mr. and Mrs. Squeers viewed the boys in the light of their proper and natural enemies; or, in other words, they held and considered that their business and profession was to get as much from every boy as could by possibility be screwed out of him. On this point they were both agreed, and behaved in unison accordingly. The only difference between them was that Mrs. Squeers waged war against the enemy openly and fearlessly, and that Squeers covered his rascality, even at home, with a spice of his habitual deceit; as if he really had a notion of some day or other being able to take himself in, and persuade himself in his own mind that he was a very good fellow.

"But come," said Squeers, "let's go to the schoolroom; and lend me a hand with my school coat, will you?"

Nicholas assisted his master to put on an old fustian shooting-jacket, which he took down from a peg in the passage; and Squeers, arming himself with his cane, led the way across the yard, to a door in the rear of the house.

"There," said the schoolmaster, as they stepped in together; "this 's our shop, Nickleby!"

It was such a crowded scene, and there were so many objects to attract attention, that, at first, Nicholas stared about him, really without seeing anything at all. By degrees, however, the place resolved itself into a bare and dirty room, with a couple of windows, whereof a tenth part might be of glass, the remainder being stopped up with old copybooks and paper. There were a couple of long, old rickety desks, cut and notched, and inked, and damaged, in every possible way, two or three forms; a detached desk for Squeers; and another for his assistant. The ceiling was supported, like that of a barn, by cross beams and rafters; and the walls were so stained and discoloured that it was impossible to tell whether they had ever been touched with paint or whitewash.

Mrs. Squeers stood at one of the desks, presiding over an immense basin of brimstone and treacle, of which delicious compound she administered a large instalment to each boy in succession: using for the purpose a common wooden spoon, which might have been originally manufactured for some gigantic top, and which widened every young gentleman's mouth considerably: they being all obliged, under heavy corporal penalties, to take in the whole of the bowl at a gasp. In another corner, huddled together for companionship, were the little boys who had arrived on the preceding night, three of them in very large leather breeches, and two in old trousers; at no great distance from these was seated the juvenile son and heir of Mr. Squeers—a striking likeness of his father—kicking, with great vigour, under the hands of Smike, who was fitting upon him a pair of new boots that bore a most suspicious resemblance to those which the least of the little boys had worn on the journey down—as the little boy himself seemed to think, for he was regarding the appropriation with

a look of most rueful amazement. Besides these, there was a long row of boys waiting, with countenances of no pleasant anticipation, to be treacled; and another file who had just escaped from the infliction, making a variety of wry mouths indicative of anything but satisfaction. The whole were attired in such motley, ill-sorted, extraordinary garments, as would have been irresistibly ridiculous, but for the foul appearance of dirt, disorder, and disease with which they were associated.

"Now," said Squeers, giving the desk a great rap with his cane, which made half the little boys nearly jump out of their boots, "is that physicking over?"

"Just over," said Mrs. Squeers, choking the last boy in her hurry, and tapping the crown of his head with the wooden spoon to restore him. "Here you, Smike; take away now. Look sharp!"

Smike shuffled out with the basin, and Mrs. Squeers, having called up a little boy with a curly head, and wiped her hands upon it, hurried out after him into a species of wash-house, where there was a small fire and a large kettle, together with a number of little wooden bowls which were arranged upon a board.

Into these bowls, Mrs. Squeers, assisted by the hungry servant, poured a brown composition, which looked like diluted pincushions without the covers, and was called porridge. A minute wedge of brown bread was inserted in each bowl, and when they had eaten their porridge by means of the bread, the boys ate the bread itself, and had finished their breakfast; whereupon Mr. Squeers said, in a solemn voice, "For what we have received, may the Lord make us truly thankful!" and went away to his own.

After some half-hour's delay, Mr. Squeers reappeared, and the boys took their places and their books, of which latter commodity the average might be about one to eight learners. A few minutes having elapsed, during which Mr. Squeers looked very profound, as if he had a perfect apprehension of what was inside all the books, and could say every word of

their contents by heart if he only chose to take the trouble, that gentleman called up the first class.

Obedient to this summons there ranged themselves in front of the schoolmaster's desk, half a dozen scarecrows, out at knees and elbows, one of whom placed a torn and filthy book beneath his learned eye.

"Th's is the first class in English spelling and philosophy, Nickleby," said Squeers, beckoning Nicholas to stand beside him. "We'll get up a Latin one, and hand that over to you. Now, then, where's the first boy?"

"Please, sir, he's cleaning the back parlour window," said the temporary head of the philosophical class.

"So he is, to be sure," rejoined Squeers. "We go upon the practical mode of teaching, Nickleby; the regular education system. C-l-e-a-n, clean, verb active, to make bright, to scour. W-i-n, win, d-e-r, der, winder, a casement. When the boy knows this out of the book, he goes and does it. It's just the same principle as the use of the globes. Where's the second boy?"

"Please, sir, he's weeding the garden," replied a small voice.

"To be sure," said Squeers, by no means disconcerted. "So he is. B-o-t, bot, t-i-n, tin, bottin, n-e-y, ney, bottinney, noun substantive, a knowledge of plants. When he has learned that bottinney means a knowledge of plants, he goes and knows 'em. That's our system, Nickleby; what do you think of it?"

"It's a very useful one, at any rate," answered Nicholas.

"I believe you," rejoined Squeers, not remarking the emphasis of his usher. "Third boy, what's a horse?"

"A beast, sir," replied the boy.

"So it is," said Squeers. "Ain't it, Nickleby?"

"I believe there is no doubt of that, sir," answered Nicholas.

"Of course there isn't," said Squeers. "A horse is a quadruped, and quadruped's Latin for beast, as everybody that's gone through the grammar knows, or else where's the use of having grammars at all?"

"Where, indeed?" said Nicholas abstractedly.

"As you're perfect in that," resumed Squeers, turning to the boy, "go and look after *my* horse, and rub him down well, or I'll rub you down. The rest of the class go and draw water up, till somebody tells you to leave off, for it's washing day to-morrow, and they want the coppers filled."

So saying, he dismissed the first class to their experiments in practical philosophy, and eyed Nicholas with a look, half cunning, and half doubtful, as if he were not altogether certain what he might think of him by this time.

"That's the way we do it, Nickleby," he said after a pause.

Nicholas shrugged his shoulders in a manner that was scarcely perceptible, and said he saw it was.

"And a very good way it is, too," said Squeers. "Now, just take them fourteen little boys and hear them some reading, because, you know, you must begin to be useful. Idling about here won't do."

Mr. Squeers said this as if it had suddenly occurred to him either that he must not say too much to his assistant or that his assistant did not say enough to him in praise of the establishment. The children were arranged in a semicircle round the new master, and he was soon listening to their dull, drawling, hesitating recital of those stories of engrossing interest which are to be found in the more antiquated spelling-books.

In this exciting occupation, the morning lagged heavily on. At one o'clock, the boys, having previously had their appetites thoroughly taken away by stir-about and potatoes, sat down in the kitchen to some hard salt beef, of which Nicholas was graciously permitted to take his portion to his own solitary desk, to eat it there in peace.

II.

AFTERNOON.

It was Mr. Squeers's custom to call the boys together, and make a sort of report, after every half-yearly visit to the

metropolis, regarding the relations and friends he had seen, the news he had heard, the letters he had brought down, the bills which had been paid, the accounts which had been left unpaid, and so forth. This solemn proceeding always took place in the afternoon of the day succeeding his return; perhaps because the boys acquired strength of mind from the suspense of the morning, or, possibly, because Mr. Squeers himself acquired greater sternness and inflexibility from certain warm potations in which he was wont to indulge after his early dinner. Be this as it may, the boys were recalled from house-window, garden, stable, and cow-yard, and the school was assembled in full conclave, when Mr. Squeers, with a small bundle of papers in his hand, and Mrs. S. following with a pair of canes, entered the room and proclaimed silence.

"Let any boy speak a word without leave," said Mr. Squeers mildly, "and I'll take the skin off his back."

This special proclamation had the desired effect, and a deathlike silence immediately prevailed, in the midst of which Mr. Squeers went on to say,—

"Boys, I've been to London, and have returned to my family and you as strong and well as ever."

According to half-yearly custom, the boys gave three feeble cheers at this refreshing intelligence. Such cheers! Sighs of extra strength with a chill on.

"I have seen the parents of some boys," continued Squeers, turning over his papers, "and they're so glad to hear how their sons are getting on, that there's no prospect at all of their going away, which, of course, is a very pleasant thing to reflect upon, for all parties."

Two or three hands went to two or three eyes when Squeers said this; but the greater part of the young gentlemen, having no particular parents to speak of, were wholly uninterested in the thing one way or other.

"I have had disappointments to contend against," said Squeers, looking very grim; "Bolder's father was two pound ten short. Where is Bolder?"

"Here he is, please, sir," rejoined twenty officious voices. Boys are very like men, to be sure.

"Come here, Bolder," said Squeers.

An unhealthy-looking boy, with warts all over his hands, stepped from his place to the master's desk, and raised his eyes imploringly to Squeers's face; his own quite white from the rapid beating of his heart.

"Bolder," said Squeers, speaking very slowly, for he was considering, as the saying goes, where to have him. "Bolder, if your father thinks that because—— Why, what's this, sir?"

As Squeers spoke, he caught up the boy's hand by the cuff of his jacket, and surveyed it with an edifying aspect of horror and disgust.

"What do you call this, sir?" demanded the school-master, administering a cut with the cane to expedite the reply.

"I can't help it, indeed, sir," rejoined the boy, crying. "They will come; it's the dirty work I think, sir—at least I don't know what it is, sir, but it's not my fault."

"Bolder," said Squeers, tucking up his wristbands, and moistening the palms of his right hand to get a good grip of the cane, "you are an incorrigible young scoundrel, and as the last thrashing did you no good, we must see what another will do towards beating it out of you."

With this, and wholly disregarding a piteous cry for mercy, Mr. Squeers fell upon the boy and caned him soundly; not leaving off, indeed, until his arm was tired out.

"There," said Squeers, when he had quite done; "rub away as hard as you like, you won't rub that off in a hurry. Oh! you won't hold that noise, won't you? Put him out, Smike."

The drudge knew better from long experience than to hesitate about obeying, so he bundled the victim out by a side door, and Mr. Squeers perched himself again on his own stool, supported by Mrs. Squeers, who occupied another at his side.

"Now let us see," said Squeers. "A letter for Cobbey. Stand up, Cobbey."

Another boy stood up, and eyed the letter very hard, while Squeers made a mental abstract of the same.

"Oh!" said Squeers; "Cobbey's grandmother is dead and his Uncle John has took to drinking, which is all the news his sisters send, except eighteenpence, which will just pay for that broken square of glass. Mrs. Squeers, my dear, will you take the money?"

The worthy lady pocketed the eighteenpence with a most businesslike air, and Squeers passed on to the next boy as coolly as possible.

"Graymarsh," said Squeers, "he's the next. Stand up, Graymarsh."

Another boy stood up, and the schoolmaster looked over the letter as before.

"Graymarsh's maternal aunt," said Squeers, when he had possessed himself of the contents, "is very glad to hear he is so well and happy, and sends her respectful compliments to Mrs. Squeers, and thinks she must be an angel. She likewise thinks Mr. Squeers is too good for this world; but hopes he may long be spared to carry on the business. Would have sent the two pairs of stockings as desired, but is short of money, so forwards a tract instead, and hopes Graymarsh will put his trust in Providence. Hopes, above all, that he will study in everything to please Mr. and Mrs. Squeers, and look upon them as his only friends; and that he will love Master Squeers; and not object to sleeping five in a bed, which no Christian should. Ah!" said Squeers, folding it up, "a delightful letter. Very affecting indeed."

Squeers proceeded with the business by calling out "Mobbs," whereupon another boy rose, and Graymarsh resumed his seat.

"Mobbs's step-mother," said Squeers, "took to her bed on hearing that he wouldn't eat fat, and has been very ill ever since. She wishes to know, by an early post, where he

expects to go to, if he quarrels with his vittles ; and with what feelings he could turn up his nose at the cow's-liver broth, after his good master had asked a blessing on it. This was told her in the London newspapers—not by Mr. Squeers, for he is too kind and too good to set anybody against anybody—and it has vexed her so much, Mobbs can't think. She is sorry to find he is discontented, which is sinful and horrid, and hopes Mr. Squeers will flog him into a happier state of mind : with this view, she has also stopped his halfpenny a week pocket-money, and given a double-bladed knife with a corkscrew in it to the missionaries, which she had bought on purpose for him."

"A sulky state of feeling," said Squeers, after a terrible pause, during which he had moistened the palm of his right hand again, "won't do. Cheerfulness and contentment must be kept up. Mobbs, come to me!"

Mobbs moved slowly towards the desk, rubbing his eyes in anticipation of good cause for doing so ; and he soon afterwards retired by the side door, with as good cause as a boy need have.

Mr. Squeers then proceeded to open a miscellaneous collection of letters ; some enclosing money, which Mrs. Squeers "took care of" ; and others referring to small articles of apparel, as caps and so forth, all of which the same lady stated to be too large, or too small, and calculated for nobody but young Squeers, who would appear, indeed, to have had most accommodating limbs, since everything that came into the school fitted him to a nicety. His head, in particular, must have been singularly elastic, for hats and caps of all dimensions were alike to him.

This business despatched, a few slovenly lessons were performed, and Squeers returned to his fireside, leaving Nicholas to take care of the boys in the schoolroom, which was very cold, and where a meal of bread and cheese was served out shortly after dark.

III.

EVENING.

THERE was a small stove at that corner of the room which was nearest to the master's desk, and by it Nicholas sat down, so depressed and self-degraded by the consciousness of his position that if death could have come upon him at that time he would have been almost happy to meet it. The cruelty of which he had been an unwilling witness, the coarse and ruffianly behaviour of Squeers even in his best moods, the filthy place, the sights and sounds about him,—all contributed to this state of feeling; but when he recollected that, being there as an assistant, he actually seemed—no matter what unhappy train of circumstances had brought him to that pass—to be the aider and abettor of a system which filled him with honest disgust and indignation, he loathed himself and felt, for the moment, as though the mere consciousness of his present situation must, through all time to come, prevent his raising his head again.

As he was absorbed in these meditations, he all at once encountered the upturned face of Smike, who was on his knees before the stove, picking a few stray cinders from the hearth and planting them on the fire. He had paused to steal a look at Nicholas, and when he saw that he was observed, shrunk back, as if expecting a blow.

"You need not fear me," said Nicholas kindly. "Are you cold?"

"N-n-o."

"You are shivering."

"I am not cold," replied Smike quickly. "I am used to it."

There was such an obvious fear of giving offence in his manner, and he was such a timid, broken-spirited creature, that Nicholas could not help exclaiming, "Poor fellow!"

If he had struck the drudge, he would have slunk away without a word. But now he burst into tears.

"Oh, dear, oh dear!" he cried, covering his face with his cracked and horny hands. "My heart will break. It will, it will."

"Hush!" said Nicholas, laying his hand upon his shoulder. "Be a man; you are nearly one by years; God help you."

"By years!" cried Smike. "Oh dear, dear, how many of them! How many of them since I was a little child, younger than any that are here now! Where are they all?"

"Whom do you speak of?" inquired Nicholas, wishing to rouse the poor half-witted creature to reason. "Tell me."

"My friends," he replied—"myself—my—oh! what sufferings mine have been?"

"There is always hope," said Nicholas; he knew not what to say.

"No," rejoined the other, "no; none for me. Do you remember the boy that died here?"

"I was not here, you know," said Nicholas gently; "but what of him?"

"Why," replied the youth, drawing closer to his questioner's side, "I was with him at night, and when it was all silent he cried no more for friends he wished to come and sit with him, but began to see faces round his bed that came from home. He said they smiled, and talked to him, and he died at last lifting his head to kiss them. Do you hear?"

"Yes, yes," rejoined Nicholas.

"What faces will smile on me when I die?" cried his companion, shivering. "Who will talk to me in those long nights? They cannot come from home; they would frighten me if they did, for I don't know what it is, and shouldn't know them. Pain and fear, pain and fear for me, alive or dead. No hope, no hope!"

The bell rang to bed; and the boy, subsiding at the sound into his usual listless state, crept away as if anxious to avoid notice. It was with a heavy heart that Nicholas soon afterwards—no, not retired; there was no retirement there—followed—to his dirty and crowded dormitory.

IV.

FLIGHT.

SMIKE, since the night Nicholas had spoken kindly to him in the schoolroom, had followed him to and fro, with an ever restless desire to serve or help him; anticipating such little wants as his humble ability could supply, and content only to be near him. He would sit beside him for hours, looking patiently into his face; and a word would brighten up his care-worn visage, and call into it a passing gleam, even of happiness. He was an altered being; he had an object now; and that object was to show his attachment to the only person—that person a stranger—who had treated him, not to say with kindness, but like a human creature.

Upon this poor being all the spleen and ill-humour that could not be vented on Nicholas were unceasingly bestowed.

The cold, feeble dawn of a January morning was stealing in at the windows of the common sleeping-room, when Nicholas, raising himself on his arm, looked among the prostrate forms which on every side surrounded him, as though in search of some particular object.

It needed a quick eye to detect, from among the huddled mass of sleepers, the form of any given individual. As they lay closely packed together, covered, for warmth's sake, with their patched and ragged clothes, little could be distinguished but the sharp outlines of pale faces, over which the sombre light shed the same dull, heavy colour; with here and there a gaunt arm thrust forth: its thinness hidden by no covering, exposed to view, in all its shrunken ugliness. A few—and these were among the youngest of the children—slept peacefully on, with smiles upon their faces, dreaming perhaps of home; but ever and again a deep and heavy sigh, breaking the stillness of the room, announced that some new sleeper had awakened to the misery of another day; and, as morning took the place of night, the smiles gradually faded away, with the friendly darkness which had given them birth.

Nicholas looked upon the sleepers, at first with the air of one who gazes upon a scene which, though familiar to him, has lost none of its sorrowful effect in consequence; and afterwards, with a more intense and searching scrutiny, a man would who missed something his eye was accustomed to meet. He was still occupied in this search, and had half risen from his bed in the eagerness of his quest, when the voice of Squeers was heard, calling from the bottom of the stairs

"Now then," cried that gentleman, "are you going to sleep all day, up there——"

"You lazy hounds!" added Mrs. Squeers, finishing the sentence

"We shall be down directly, sir," replied Nicholas

"Down directly!" said Squeers. "Ah! you had better be down directly, or I'll be down upon some of you in less than a wink!"

Nicholas looked hurriedly round again, but made no answer

"Smike!" shouted Squeers

"Do you want your head broke in a fresh place, Smike?" demanded his amiable lady in the same key.

Still there was no reply, and still Nicholas stared about him, as did the greater part of the boys, who were by this time roused

"Confound his impudence!" muttered Squeers, rapping the stair rail impatiently with his cane. "Nickleby!"

"Well, sir."

"Send that obstinate scoundrel down, don't you hear me calling?"

"He is not here, sir," replied Nicholas.

"Don't tell me a lie," retorted the schoolmaster. "He is."

"He is not," retorted Nicholas angrily; "don't tell me one."

"We shall soon see about that," said Mr. Squeers, rushing upstairs. "I'll find him, I warrant you."

With which assurance Mr. Squeers bounced into the

dormitory, and, swinging his cane in the air ready for a blow, darted into the corner where the lean body of the drudge was usually stretched at night. The cane descended harmlessly upon the ground. There was nobody there.

"What does this mean?" said Squeers, turning round with a very pale face. "Where have you hid him?"

"I have seen nothing of him since last night," replied Nicholas.

"Come," said Squeers, evidently frightened, though he endeavoured to look otherwise, "you won't save him this way. Where is he?"

"At the bottom of the nearest pond for aught I know," rejoined Nicholas in a low voice, and fixing his eyes full on the master's face.

"Hang you, what do you mean by that?" retorted Squeers in great perturbation.

Without waiting for a reply, he inquired of the boys whether any one among them knew anything of their missing schoolmate.

There was a general hum of anxious denial, in the midst of which one shrill voice was heard to say (as, indeed, everybody thought),—

"Please, sir, I think Smike's run away, sir."

"Ha!" cried Squeers, turning sharp round; "who said that?"

"Tomkins, please, sir," rejoined a chorus of voices.

Mr. Squeers made a plunge into the crowd, and at one dive caught a very little boy, habited still in his night-gear, and the perplexed expression of whose countenance, as he was brought forward, seemed to intimate that he was as yet uncertain whether he was about to be punished or rewarded for the suggestion. He was not long in doubt.

"You think he has run away, do you, sir?" demanded Squeers.

"Yes, please, sir," replied the little boy.

"And what, sir," said Squeers, catching the little boy suddenly by the arms, "what reason have you to suppose that

any boy would want to run away from this establishment? Eh, sir?"

The child raised a dismal cry by way of answer, and Mr. Squeers, throwing himself into the most favourable attitude for exercising his strength, beat him until the little urchin in his writhings actually rolled out of his hands, when he mercifully allowed him to roll away as he best could.

"There," said Squeers. "Now if any other boy thinks Smike has run away, I should be glad to have a talk with him."

There was, of course, a profound silence, during which Nicholas showed his disgust as plainly as looks could show it.

"Well, Nickleby," said Squeers, eyeing him maliciously. "You think he has run away, I suppose?"

"I think it extremely likely," replied Nicholas in a quiet manner.

"Oh, you do, do you?" sneered Squeers. "Maybe you know he has?"

"I know nothing of the kind."

"He didn't tell you he was going, I suppose, did he?" sneered Squeers.

"He did not," replied Nicholas; "I am very glad he did not, for it would then have been my duty to have warned you in time."

"Which no doubt you would have been very sorry to do," said Squeers in a taunting fashion.

"I should indeed," replied Nicholas. "You interpret my feelings with great accuracy."

Mrs. Squeers had listened to this conversation from the bottom of the stairs; but, now losing all patience, she hastily assumed her night-jacket, and made her way to the scene of action.

"What's all this here to do?" said the lady, as the boys fell off right and left, to save her the trouble of clearing a passage with her brawny arms. "What on earth are you talking to him for, Squeery?"

"Why, my dear," said Squeers, "the fact is that Smike is not to be found."

"Well, I know that," said the lady, "and where's the wonder? If you get a parcel of proud-stomached teachers, that set the young dogs a-rebelling, what else can you look for? Now, young man, you just have the kindness to take yourself off to the schoolroom, and take the boys off with you; and don't you stir out of there till you have leave given you, or you and I may fall out in a way that'll spoil your beauty, handsome as you think yourself, and so I tell you."

"Indeed?" said Nicholas.

"Yes; and indeed and indeed again, Mister Jackanapes," said the excited lady; "and I wouldn't keep such as you in the house another hour if I had my way."

"Nor would you if I had mine," replied Nicholas. "Now, boys!"

"Ah! Now, boys," said Mrs. Squeers, mimicking, as nearly as she could, the voice and manner of the usher. "Follow your leader, boys, and take pattern by Smike if you dare. See what he'll get for himself when he is brought back; and, mind! I tell you that you shall have as bad, and twice as bad, if you so much as open your mouths about him."

With these words Mrs. Squeers dismissed the boys, and after a little light skirmishing with those in the rear, who were pressing forward to get out of the way, but were detained for a few moments by the throng in front, succeeded in clearing the room, when she confronted her spouse alone.

"He is off," said Mrs. Squeers. "The cow-house and stable are locked up, so he can't be there; and he's not downstairs anywhere, for the girl has looked. Now, if you take the chaise and go one road, and I borrow Swallow's chaise and go the other, what with keeping our eyes open, and asking questions, one or other of us is pretty certain to lay hold of him."

The worthy lady's plan was adopted, and put in execution without a moment's delay. After a very hasty breakfast, and the prosecution of some inquiries in the village, the result of which seemed to show that he was on the right

track, Squeers started forth in the pony-chaise, intent upon discovery and vengeance. Shortly afterwards, Mrs. Squeers issued forth in another chaise and another direction, taking with her a good-sized bludgeon, several odd pieces of strong cord, and a stout labouring man: all provided and carried upon the expedition with the sole object of assisting in the capture, and (once caught) insuring the safe custody of the unfortunate Smike.

V.

CAPTURE.

THE news that Smike had been caught and brought back in triumph ran like wildfire through the hungry community, and expectation was on tiptoe all the morning. On tiptoe it was destined to remain, however, until afternoon; when Squeers, having refreshed himself with his dinner, and further strengthened himself by an extra libation or so, made his appearance (accompanied by his amiable partner) with a countenance of portentous import, and a fearful instrument of flagellation, strong, supple, wax-ended, and new—in short, purchased that morning expressly for the occasion.

"Is every boy here?" asked Squeers in a tremendous voice.

Every boy was there, but every boy was afraid to speak; so Squeers glared along the lines to assure himself; and every eye drooped, and every head cowered down, as he did so.

"Each boy keep his place," said Squeers, administering his favourite blow to the desk, and regarding with gloomy satisfaction the universal start which it never failed to occasion. "Nickleby! to your desk, sir."

It was remarked by more than one small observer that there was a very curious and unusual expression in the usher's face; but he took his seat, without opening his lips in reply. Squeers, casting a triumphant glance at his assistant and a look of most comprehensive despotism on the boys, left the

room, and shortly afterwards returned, dragging Smike by the collar—or rather by that fragment of his jacket which was nearest the place where his collar would have been, had he boasted such a decoration.

In any other place, the appearance of the wretched, jaded, spiritless object would have occasioned a murmur of compassion and remonstrance. It had some effect even there; for the lookers-on moved uneasily in their seats; and a few of the boldest ventured to steal looks at each other, expressive of indignation and pity.

They were lost on Squeers, however, whose gaze was fastened on the luckless Smike, as he inquired, according to custom in such cases, whether he had anything to say for himself.

"Nothing, I suppose?" said Squeers with a diabolical grin.

Smike glanced round, and his eye rested for an instant on Nicholas, as if he had expected him to intercede; but his look was riveted on his desk.

"Have you anything to say?" demanded Squeers, again giving his right arm two or three flourishes to try its power and suppleness. "Stand a little out of the way, Mrs. Squeers, my dear; I've hardly got room enough."

"Spare me, sir!" cried Smike.

"Oh! that's all, is it?" said Squeers. "Yes, I'll flog you within an inch of your life, and spare you that."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Mrs. Squeers; "that's a good un!"

"I was driven to do it," said Smike faintly, and casting another imploring look about him.

"Driven to do it, were you?" said Squeers. "Oh! it wasn't your fault; it was mine, I suppose—eh?"

"A nasty, ungrateful, pig-headed, brutish, obstinate, sneaking dog," exclaimed Mrs. Squeers, taking Smike's head under her arm, and administering a cuff at every epithet; "what does he mean by that?"

"Stand aside, my dear," replied Squeers. "We'll try and find out."

Mrs. Squeers, being out of breath with her exertions,

complied. Squeers caught the boy firmly in his grip; one desperate cut had fallen on his body—he was wincing from the lash and uttering a scream of pain—it was raised again, and again about to fall, when Nicholas Nickleby, suddenly starting up, cried, “Stop!” in a voice that made the rafters ring.

“Who cried stop?” said Squeers, turning savagely round.

“I,” said Nicholas, stepping forward. “This must ~~not~~ go on.”

“Must not go on?” cried Squeers, almost in a shriek.

“No!” thundered Nicholas.

Aghast and stupefied by the boldness of the interference, Squeers released his hold of Smike, and, falling back a pace or two, gazed upon Nicholas with looks that were positively frightful.

“I say must not,” repeated Nicholas, ~~nothing daunted~~—“shall not. I will prevent it.”

Squeers continued to gaze upon him, with his eyes starting out of his head; but astonishment had actually, for the moment, bereft him of speech.

“You have disregarded all my quiet interference in the miserable lad’s behalf,” said Nicholas; “you have returned no answer to the letter in which I begged forgiveness for him, and offered to be responsible that he would remain quietly here. Don’t blame me for this public interference. You have brought it upon yourself; not I.”

“Sit down, beggar!” screamed Squeers, almost beside himself with rage, and seizing Smike as he spoke.

“Wretch,” rejoined Nicholas fiercely, “touch him at your peril! I will not stand by and see it done. My blood is up, and I have the strength of ten such men as you. Look to yourself, for by Heaven I will not spare you, if you drive me on!”

“Stand back!” cried Squeers, brandishing his weapon.

“I have a long series of insults to avenge,” said Nicholas, flushed with passion; “and my indignation is aggravated by the dastardly cruelties practised on helpless infancy in

this foul den. Have a care ; for if you do raise the devil within me, the consequences shall fall heavily upon your own head !”

He had scarcely spoken, when Squeers, in a violent outbreak of wrath, and with a cry like the howl of a wild beast, spat upon him, and struck him a blow across the face with his instrument of torture, which raised up a bar of livid flesh as it was inflicted. Smarting with the agony of the blow, and concentrating into that one moment all his feelings of rage, scorn, and indignation, Nicholas sprang upon him, wrested the weapon from his hand, and, pinning him by the throat, beat the ruffian till he roared for mercy.

The boys—with the exception of Master Squeers, who, coming to his father's assistance, harassed the enemy in the rear—moved not, hand or foot ; but Mrs. Squeers, with many shrieks for aid, hung on to the tail of her partner's coat, and endeavoured to drag him from his infuriated adversary ; while Miss Squeers, who had been peeping through the keyhole in expectation of a very different scene, darted in at the very beginning of the attack, and, after launching a shower of inkstands at the usher's head, beat Nicholas to her heart's content : animating herself at every blow with the recollection of his having refused her proffered love, and thus imparting additional strength to an arm which (as she took after her mother in this respect) was at no time one of the weakest.

Nicholas, in the full torrent of his violence, felt the blows no more than if they had been dealt with feathers ; but, becoming tired of the noise and uproar, and feeling that his arm grew weak besides, he threw all his remaining strength into half a dozen finishing cuts, and flung Squeers from him with all the force he could muster. The violence of his fall precipitated Mrs. Squeers completely over an adjacent form ; and Squeers, striking his head against it in his descent, lay at his full length on the ground, stunned and motionless.

Having brought affairs to this happy termination, and ascertained, to his thorough satisfaction, that Squeers was

only stunned, and not dead (upon which point he had had some unpleasant doubts at first), Nicholas left his family to restore him, and retired to consider what course he had better adopt. He looked anxiously round for Smike as he left the room, but he was nowhere to be seen.

After a brief consideration, he packed up a few clothes in a small leathern valise, and, finding that nobody offered to oppose his progress, marched boldly out by the front door, and shortly afterwards struck into the road which led to Greta Bridge.

* * * *

He did not travel far that afternoon, for by this time it was nearly dark, and there had been a heavy fall of snow, which not only rendered the way toilsome, but the track uncertain and difficult to find after daylight, save by experienced wayfarers. He lay, that night, at a cottage, where beds were let at a cheap rate to the more humble class of travellers; and, rising betime next morning, made his way before night to Boroughbridge. Passing through the town in search of some cheap resting place, he stumbled upon an empty barn within a couple of hundred yards of the roadside; in a warm corner of which he stretched his weary limbs, and soon fell fast asleep.

When he awoke next morning, and tried to recollect his dreams, which had been all connected with his recent sojourn at Dotheboys Hall, he sat up, rubbed his eyes, and stared—not with the most composed countenance possible—at some motionless object which seemed to be stationed within a few yards in front of him.

“Strange!” cried Nicholas. “Can this be some lingering creation of the visions that have scarcely left me? It cannot be real—and yet I—I am awake! Smike!”

The form moved, rose, advanced, and dropped upon its knees at his feet. It was Smike indeed.

“Why do you kneel to me?” said Nicholas, hastily raising him.

"To go with you—anywhere—everywhere—to the world's end—to the churchyard grave," replied Smike, clinging to his hand. "Let me, oh, do let me! You are my home—my kind friend. Take me with you, pray."

"I am a friend who can do little for you," said Nicholas, kindly. "How came you here?"

He had followed him, it seemed: had never lost sight of him all the way: had watched while he slept, and when he halted for refreshments; and had feared to appear before, lest he should be sent back. He had not intended to appear now; but Nicholas had awakened more suddenly than he looked for, and he had had no time to conceal himself.

"Poor fellow!" said Nicholas. "Your hard fate denies you any friend but one, and he is nearly as poor and helpless as yourself."

"May I—may I go with you?" asked Smike timidly. "I will be your faithful, hardworking servant; I will indeed I want no clothes," added the poor creature, drawing his rags together: "these will do very well. I only want to be near you."

"And you shall," cried Nicholas. "And the world shall deal by you as it does by me, till one or both of us shall quit it for a better. Come!"

With these words he strapped his burden on his shoulders, and, taking his stick in one hand, extended the other to his delighted charge; and so they passed out of the barn together.

LIFE AND ADVENTURE.



B.]

ATTACK AND DEATH

[See The Brave Chatelain p. 225]

LIFE AND ADVENTURE.

A BRAVE CHÂTELAINE.

TALL OF THE THIRTY YEARS WAR.

BY G. A. HENTY.

DO you not think, Countess, that it would be better for you to retire to the ~~west~~ ^{west}? There is news that the Imperial army is but forty miles away, and that, as usual, there are bands of plunderers spreading over the whole country; and a man has arrived who tells me that a château about fifteen miles from here was burned yesterday."

"I have told you before, Freidrich, that I will not stir from here," the lady to whom he spoke said, with an impatient tap of her foot. "I will not stir from here unless I see a force approaching against which no defence can be made. Count Ludwig committed this château to my charge. It is true that when he did so he had no thought that the Imperialists would come in this direction. That does not alter the case; they are in this neighbourhood, and I am in charge, and intend to remain so. If a small party of marauders comes, we have already made preparations to beat them off; if a large body of troops are seen, we have horses stabled below sufficient to carry all here, and can issue out at the back of the house and ride for it."

The speaker was little more than a girl. She had only a few months before married Count Ludwig von Ernstein, a

colonel of a regiment of Hessian cavalry. He had a short time since ridden to join the army of Turenne, leaving his young wife in charge of the château. All his retainers and the tenants of the estate capable of bearing arms had been enlisted in the regiment, and there remained in the château only the four maids of the Countess and eight men, who were no longer fit for service in the field. At the time he did so he had no thought of the Imperialists coming in that direction; but he had nevertheless advised the Countess to retire to the capital. She had, however, scoffed at the idea, saying that she had been far too happy at the château to think of leaving it.

Germany had for years been torn by the terrible struggle known as the 'Thirty Years' War. Hundreds of villages had altogether disappeared, numerous towns had been wiped out, and the population had diminished by more than half, and there were as yet no signs that the war was near its termination.

The Swedes, who, under Gustavus Adolphus, had at first taken the most prominent part in the struggle on the side of the Protestant princes, had fallen at Leipsic, and his army had been defeated with terrible loss at the battle of Nordlingen; and, in order to prevent Austria from becoming all-powerful, France had entered the arena, and her troops and the Swedish army still in the field succeeded in holding the Austrians in check.

The château of Count Ludwig had been built before the troubles began. It was a château and not a castle, but the possibility of attack by marauding bands had not been lost sight of. There were no windows in the lower storey. Here were the store-rooms, domestic offices, and stabling for a considerable number of horses. The house was in the form of a square, with a courtyard some forty feet each way in the centre. On the upper floor were the apartments of the family and the guests' rooms, all spacious and airy, with large windows. The gate leading through the house to the courtyard was strong and massive, and could offer a long resistance to anything short of artillery or fire. It was approached by

four wide shallow steps that would offer no obstacle to the rider; as to carriages, they were scarce known in the country at the time it was built, and planks were laid down across the steps when carts with firewood, forage, or freight produce entered the château. At the other side of the building, approached by a narrow passage from the courtyard, was another door, as massive as the gate itself. This was always kept locked.

It was winter, and the snow covered the ground deeply. The roof of the château was flat, and here, since the news came that an Imperialist army was moving in the direction of Hesse, a man was always posted night and day. The Countess had herself superintended all the preparations for defence: the arms, of which there was an abundance, had been cleaned and furbished; cartridges had been made in large numbers, and bags of bullets cast. Twenty-four musketoons and arquebuses were piled in readiness on the first floor in a disused room. Four braziers of charcoal were kept alight, and by each stood an iron pot and a hundredweight of scrap-lead. The women were instructed how to load the firearms, and the eight men were told off to the same number of windows facing the front.

"Tell me, Freidrich," she said, after announcing the determination that she had made, "against what force do you think the Count would defend the château, were he here?"

"I cannot say, madame."

"A hundred men, should you think?"

The old servitor shook his head decidedly. "The Count is as brave as a lion, but he would know that, even with his leading, eight old men could do nothing against half that number."

"You think that he would defend it against fifty?"

"No, lady. They could surround the house and attack on all sides; we could do nothing against them."

"Five-and-twenty?"

"I cannot say; about five-and-twenty," Freidrich said doubtfully. "We are all past service in the field, but we can shoot

straight and use pike and sword as well perhaps as we ever did. Certainly many of the assailants would fall before they could gain entry. I think, perhaps, with the Count to lead us, we could defend the place against five-and-twenty."

"I am not the Count, Freidrich, but I am the Countess. I cannot strike a stalwart blow as he can; but should a party of marauders come here, you will see that I shall not lack courage."

"I am well assured of that."

The next morning, when the Countess was at breakfast, the watcher on the terrace above ran down with the report that he could see a body of men in the distance.

"How far are they off, Karl?" she asked quietly.

"They are coming by the road through Mingen, and are a good four miles away. I should not be able to make them out were it not for the snow, on which they seem as black specks."

"I will come up when I have finished my breakfast," the Countess said; "but you may as well tell Freidrich to see that all put on their breast-pieces and iron caps, and when they have done that let them load the firearms."

Five minutes later the Countess ascended to the terrace. Freidrich was already there.

"What do you make them out to be, Freidrich?"

"They are horsemen, Countess; but more than that I cannot say."

"How many do you think there are?"

"They are riding in a clump, madame, and there is no counting them yet."

The Countess looked fixedly at them.

"They are but three miles away now. They are riding four abreast, I think, and there is one in advance. The column is not a deep one—not more than six or seven, I should think. Seven would be twenty-eight besides the officer."

"Your calculations are correct, Freidrich; and if they are six deep, there will, with the officer, you see, be just twenty-five. Well, a few more or less makes no difference. Set the women to blow up the fires with fans, see that the bars are all in their place, and the men may as well carry some sacks of

wheat from the granary and pile them against the gate. When they have done that, let them draw water from the well, fill the horse-buckets and all other utensils in the house with water, and bring them up to this window over the gate, and fill the coppers to the brim and light fires under them."

"It shall be done, Countess," the old man said more briskly than before, for the quiet confidence of his mistress was contagious, and he began to feel something of the ardour of his youth.

The Countess continued to watch the approaching horsemen. They had turned off the main road, and it was evident that the château was the object of their journey. In a few minutes she went down. The braziers were all glowing. Under her directions the men placed about twenty pounds of lead in each pot, and put these over the fires. Then she went round the house and saw that all her orders had been carried out.

When the horsemen were some half a mile from the house the men took their post at the window, each having three firearms and four or five loaded pistols lying handy; the Imperialists—for it could be seen now that they were Bavarian troopers—coming on at a trot.

"Now, Freidrich," she said, "do you place yourself by my side, and be in readiness to fetch one of those pots of molted lead when I tell you."

The officer rode up and checked his horse some fifteen yards from the gate.

The Countess stepped forward to the open window. "Who are you, sir, and what do you want?"

"I am Captain Otto von Stein, and I summon you in the name of His Highness the Duke of Bavaria and of His Imperial Highness the Emperor of Austria, my master's ally, to surrender this house."

"Your request is modest, sir. I have heard your name as one of the scourges of quiet villages and châteaux like this, but it has not been coupled with any very valiant deeds in war. And suppose I decline to surrender, what then?"

"In that case," the officer said in an angry tone, "every

soul in the house will be put to the sword. It is of no use your attempting to resist, madame. I made inquiries in the village, and learnt that your household consists of nine men and four women. For them to oppose the thirty-two soldiers under my command would be madness."

\ "Then I am afraid we are all insane," the Countess said cheerfully, "for we have no idea of surrendering ourselves to your tender mercies."

While she had been speaking she had made a sign to Freidrich, who now arrived with a pot of boiling lead.

With an exclamation of fury Von Stein urged his horse up the steps to the gates, against which he struck the pommel of his sword to ascertain its solidity.

"Over with it," the Countess said, and the man, stepping to the window, poured out its contents.

There was a terrible cry and the shrill scream of a horse. Maddened by the pain, the animal reared till it almost fell back, and its rider, who was shaken by the sudden agony, was hurled backwards, his head striking against the edge of one of the steps. With a shout of rage his men dashed forward. Some of them discharged their pistols at the windows, while others dismounted and lifted their officer from the ground. A glance was sufficient to show that he was dead, and the men hastily ran down to avoid a repetition of his fate. In the meantime the men at the windows had not been idle. As soon as the first discharge of the troopers' pistols had ceased, they had stepped forward and discharged a volley among them, and then, catching up other musketoons, had repeated it. Six of the troopers fell, and it was evident that three or four others were wounded.

"We have no more than twenty-two assailants, now," the Countess said; "if they are wise, the rest will go off. I hardly think they will do that without another effort, Freidrich. They must have gained rare booty under their notorious leader, and will hardly like to return to the army and report that he and six of his men have been killed—to say nothing of four or five others wounded."

The troopers drew off beyond range, and then talked together. Then the sergeant gave an order, and four of them rode off towards the village.

"What do you think they are going to do now, Freidrich?"

"I have not the least idea, Countess. It may be that they know of another band within a few miles, and are going to fetch them up; it may be so, but I hope not. But even if they bring another thirty or so, I shall have no fear of their taking the house—at any rate, not by daylight. It is scarcely likely that they will remain here long to besiege us, for we heard yesterday that Turenne's army is within a day's march of the Imperialists; and we may be sure that all these scouting-parties were warned, when they left camp, to be back in time for the battle."

An hour passed, and then from the top of the house a number of people could be seen coming from the village; the four troopers were among them. As soon as they were near enough to distinguish the outline of their figures, the Countess said, "They are women, and they are all carrying great bundles."

"I am afraid it is faggots, madame," Friedrich said; "it can be nothing else. It must be that those wretches are making the poor people carry the faggots they have stored for their winter fires, down here, to burn our gate in. However, the troopers will find it dangerous work to place them. I should think they would not even attempt it till nightfall. Of course it means trouble. But I am glad to see them; for it is infinitely better than if, as we feared, the men had gone off to bring up another band to aid them."

When the villagers approached, it was evident that every one capable of carrying even the smallest faggot had been pressed into the service. There were women, old men, girls and boys down to nine or ten years old. When they arrived at the spot where the marauders were gathered they stopped. There was evidently a violent altercation. The troopers drew their swords, and struck the villagers with the flats; others pointed pistols at them; others beat them with their fists.

"What can all that be about?" the Countess asked. "The poor creatures have obeyed their orders, what more can they want of them?"

The man made no reply until he saw the villagers moving forward again. Then he said angrily, "The rascals! They're going to make them place the faggots against the gate. It is a crafty trick, but a cruel one. What you say, Countess—shall we defeat it by opening the gates and letting them all in?"

The Countess was silent for a minute, and then said: "We cannot do that. The troopers would burn down the village in revenge; and what would the poor people do then—in such weather as this? We could not support them till the spring, for my lord had, as you know, difficulty enough in fitting out the men for the war. We have no more provisions than enough to last us till the spring, and as there are no men to cultivate the fields, there will be little money forthcoming next year. Let them come and put the faggots down. As fast as they do so, soak them with water—the brigands will have gained nothing by their plan."

As they came up, the women cried out to the Countess, who was now standing at the window over the door, that they could not help aiding her foes, for they threatened to kill them all and burn down their village.

"I know you cannot help it," she said; "I am not angry with you. Do not hurry to throw down your faggots; put them down, but quietly."

As soon as they began to do so, two men at the window poured pails of water down over them; while the others and the women took down the pails to the well as fast as they were emptied, and brought them up again. As soon as the soldiers saw what was being done, they ran some distance forward, and began firing with their pistols at the window. Two of the men were called from their work, and, betaking themselves again to their muskets, opened fire; and as these carried farther than the pistols, the assailants moved off again, two or three of them having been wounded.

As the women placed their faggots against the door, they made off in different directions, taking care not to pass near the enraged troopers.

"The business is no longer dangerous," the Countess said ; "it is simply annoying. There cannot be more than sixteen unwounded men among them. If we had but two or three more men we could sally out and attack them. I do not think they will make any further attempt against us ; they must see that it is hopeless. If it was not for shame at being worsted by us, I believe they would mount and ride off at once."

"I am afraid they will burn the village as they leave, madame. Of course they know that it belongs to the Count, and it would be some sort of satisfaction to them to take their revenge."

"I fancy they will stay where they are till it is dark, and then go. The wood is so thoroughly soaked with water that it would not burn ; they have no means of breaking down the door, and for sixteen of them to try to assault the place with ladders would be simply throwing away their lives. I am convinced that they will go, but it will doubtless be to return again in the future with a larger force. Would to Heaven that we had another half-dozen men here, so that we could ambush them on the way back and leave no one alive to carry the tale."

"I believe the men would even now sally out and fight them, so much are they excited over the success they have so far had."

"That would be madness. Were it man for man I would trust them to give a good account of these brigands, for I know they are all brave men. The Count told me that he had chosen them as retainers of the household as a reward for the bravery they had often shown in battle ; but against twenty Imperial troopers—for even the wounded among them would doubtless be able to aid in their defence—it cannot be thought of. And yet, as you say, it would be of the greatest importance that none of these men should get back to their camp, for sooner or later the Imperialists, if in this neighbourhood, would send a force here to retrieve their disaster."

An hour later the Countess again sent to the sergeant. "Freidrich," she said, "we have agreed that these men will probably leave as soon as it gets dark, but it is just possible that they may attempt one more attack. Would you remain here in command with only the four women with you? They are all stout wenches, and could, if needs be, fire an arquebuss or use a pike in defence of their lives."

The old sergeant looked at her in astonishment. "But, Countess——" he stammered.

"I have quite determined upon my plan," she broke in. "I shall, with the eight men, sally out by the door at the back of the house. We shall be mounted. Where the troopers are posted they cannot see what is going on behind, and we can gain the wood there without being observed. We shall then ride round to the village, and as the Imperialists come through we shall attack them. Taking them by surprise, we can reckon upon killing more than half of them. As each man carries two musketoons, we shall have sixteen shots. We shall, of course, be in houses, and at such close quarters certainly ten shots should take effect; then we will fall upon the others. They will be panic-struck, believing that some reinforcement has come up. We shall then mount and pursue the fugitives. Our horses are fresh and well fed; there is no doubt that theirs will have been on the move for some days, so we ought to overtake them. Not knowing our force, each man will be riding for his life, and we shall come up to them one by one, and I hope that not one will escape us. Indeed, if I carry out the plan that I have in my mind, I hope that not one will leave the village alive."

"It is a bold plan, Countess," Freidrich said after a pause, "and I should like it well if I were to take part in it, instead of you. Would you not stay here with one of the other men, and let me manage the affair?"

"Certainly not, as far as I am concerned," she said decidedly. "But as you are in command of the men, if you like to choose one whom you can most rely upon to remain here in charge, I will permit you to do so."

"Thank you, Countess. I would appoint Rudolph. He is a good soldier, but he would be of little use to us, since the wound that he received in his hip prevents him mounting a horse, while for the work here he will be as useful as I should be."

"Yes; I did not think of that. Then arrange the matter with him; I will speak with the women myself."

These, when the Countess had explained the matter to them, all expressed their readiness to do their best in case the house should be attacked, especially as the Countess assured them that, should any firing be heard, she would at once ride up with the men and attack the Imperialists, who, thus taken by surprise and cut off from their horses, would be easily defeated.

The Imperialists made no sign of movement, and at three o'clock the Countess, who had buckled on a light cuirass of her husband's, girded on a sword, and put on a steel cap, rode out with the eight men at the back of the house, and twenty minutes later entered the village.

The place was entirely deserted, the people all preferring to remain in the woods until the Imperialists departed. It was not long, however, before some, who had from their hiding-places seen the troop ride down, returned. The horses were placed together in a clump behind one of the houses. Then they set to work, fastening ropes, which the men had brought with them, across the road at the end of the village farthest from the château. Two barriers were made, three ropes being employed for each, two feet above each other—one two, one four, and one six feet above the road, so that they could neither be forced nor leaped.

The upper rope was intended to sweep a rider from his seat should the lower ones give way before the rush of the galloping horses. Then many pieces of heavy furniture—bedsteads, heavy tables, and settees—were taken out of the cottages and placed in the road.

Three or four of the older peasants produced guns that were hidden away, and declared themselves ready to take part in the fight; while the women, many of whom were as strong

as men, armed themselves with axes, billhooks, and other weapons.

At the end of the village nearest to the château two ropes were placed across the road at a point where trees grew nearly opposite each other. The ends on one side were fastened round a tree, two and four feet above the ground, in readiness. Two women agreed to post themselves by the opposite tree, and to tighten the ropes and secure them similarly as soon as the last of the troopers had passed, and their retreat would thereby be cut off.

It was dark by the time the preparations were completed. Four houses were chosen in the middle of the village, two on each side of the road, and the eight retainers divided among these. In the next two houses were six old peasants with guns, while in the others near were the women, who were determined to join in the fight; all others were sent out of the village. The Countess posted herself with Freidrich and another of the men.

By five o'clock it was pitch dark. A trampling of horses was heard, and every man took his post at a window. The orders were that no one was to fire until Freidrich's shot gave the signal. Three or four extra bullets had been dropped into every gun, and all felt confident that their success would be complete. The Imperialists rode on until their sergeant gave the word "Halt!" when they were just opposite the houses where their foes were silently waiting them.

"Now," he said, "be quick, lads. Fire every house; you are sure to find plenty of embers alight in the fireplaces."

At this moment Freidrich fired, and the shot was followed by thirteen others.

The effect was terrible. Men and horses went over in wild confusion; but four or five troopers kept their seats, and as the second guns of the retainers spoke out, these too disappeared. Then the men rushed out, sword in hand, and finished the work that the bullets had begun.

In those days there was no thought of quarter for a wounded foe. The war became more and more savage as it proceeded.

Few prisoners were taken, and men really fought for victory or death.

The Countess did not leave the cottage until all was over. Had the result been less decisive she would have run out with the men, but the two volleys of musketry had decided the matter. Not two minutes had elapsed from the time Freidrich fired till the last Imperialist had been killed, and the shouts of triumph of her retainers and the peasants told that the work was done. The shouts told the villagers in the distance that their enemies had perished, and they soon came flocking in.

"I shall ride back to the château at once, Freidrich," the Countess said, as he came in to report that the last of the enemy was killed. "The horses that were uninjured and all the saddlery and the arms of the men had best be brought up to the château. See that their bodies are removed from the road and buried at once; those of the dead horses can be removed to-morrow morning. No doubt a good deal of money will be found on the bodies of these marauders. Have it all put together, and divided equally into two parts; one of these will be the share of yourself and the men, the other hand over to the headman for division among the villagers. Poor creatures, it will be welcome inducement to them in these hard times."

She then mounted and rode back.

"It is I, Rudolph," she called, as she approached the château. "Our success has been complete, not a man has escaped."

Shouts of joy arose from the windows. Hearing only the two volleys, there had been fears that the troop might have ridden through and escaped, and the relief to the women when they heard the Countess's voice was immense. Three hours later Freidrich and the men returned. The former reported that her orders had been carried out, and the Imperialists who had fallen in the village had all been buried.

"We will be up betimes," he said, "and do the same for those who fell here."

A considerable amount of booty had been gained, for the band had long been engaged in plundering operations; and as each man carried the gold and jewels he had taken about him, the total amounted to a sum that gave a considerable share to Freidrich and the eight men, and overjoyed the villagers, who found themselves in possession of sums that would keep the wolf from the door for many a month to come. Two days later Count Ludwig returned with a small body of horse, and reported that the Imperialists had been completely defeated on the day after the attack on the château. He was surprised, indeed, at hearing the events that had taken place there.

"I had no idea that you were such a heroine, Bertha," he said; "not only a heroine, but a strategist. I feel that if justice were done, I ought to resign the command of my regiment to you. Thank God there is no fear of the Imperialists again coming in this direction for some time, and if they do, I shall certainly see that you leave when I do. You have made a marvellous defence; but I am afraid that you will be so puffed up by your victory that you would try to defend the place if the Emperor himself and the whole army were to sit down before it."

IN AND OUT OF TWO FIXES.

AN INDIAN JUNGLE STORY.

BY H. HERVEY.

I.

I HAD just attained my sixteenth birthday when I arrived in India, and before six months had passed over my head I succeeded, by dint of passing the necessary examination—aided by interest—in obtaining an appointment under the Government of India. I was not seventeen years of age when I met with the following adventure.

Parenthetically let me say that I “went up” at a time when the Government was extending the department to which it had appointed me, and stood in need of officers, or I should have been obliged to wait some years for employment.

There was a railway in my range, and the nature of my work took me on the line—not travelling in the trains, but on foot, along the Permanent Way, with a working-party; generally from station to station in a day. Very often, however, the ’tween distances were too long, so I would camp in my tents wherever evening found me, my carts and servants preceding me by the adjacent accommodation road, with orders to halt at such-and-such a milestone, I following with my working-party. Some fifteen miles of this railway traversed a dense jungle, the line at the same time climbing a *ghaut*, or acclivity, by a series of curves and heavy gradients. The country for miles around was sparsely populated, and in the

jungle itself there was but one small village, about two miles up the incline, perched on the crest of some large rocks overlooking the line.

I was on my way up the *ghaut* on the occasion in question, and as I approached the village I noticed that all the villagers had retired to their fastness instead of being busy about the patch of cultivation on the low ground beneath, as I had usually seen them. No sooner, however, did the natives sight me than they swarmed down and waylaid me at the level crossing-gate opposite their hamlet. They were in great tribulation, they said; for the night before, while some of them were, as usual, keeping watch over their cultivation below the rocks, they had seen in the moonlight a tiger sitting on the railway embankment and apparently watching them. They knew, they said, of the existence of tigers in the jungle, but this was the first time one had come so near to their abode. When I asked them what all this had to do with me, they pointed to my rifle, which one of my men carried, and besought me to abide with them that night and shoot the tiger for them. They offered me the best their village could afford in the shape of milk, eggs, fowls and vegetables, and implored me to remain.

It was now two o'clock in the afternoon. I had to traverse some five miles before reaching camp, which I had ordered to be pitched on some open ground at the next level crossing, and I had nothing with me except what I stood in; so I determined to go on to my tents, but I decided to return and try to get a shot at the beast. I asked the villagers the hour at which they saw their dreaded visitor on the previous night. "Just before the first cock-crow," they said. This, on a moonlight night in India, means between eleven and twelve. So I promised the poor people, who were mostly women and children, that I would be back at about that time, enjoining them all to retire early up their rocks, and not leave even a dog on the low ground. Tearing a leaf from my pocket-book, I wrote to the Permanent Way Inspector, who lived at the next station ahead some six miles beyond my camp, asking

for the immediate loan of a light trolley, adding I would give particulars when I saw him, probably on the next day. Dispatching the missive by one of my men, with orders to put his best foot forward, and come back to camp with the trolley, I proceeded with my work, and duly reached my tents in good time for my "tub" and dinner.

II.

At the time I am writing of, there were but two night-trains on this railway, the up and down mail-train. It was a single line, and the up train would pass about twelve o'clock, the down some two hours later. The trolley arrived at my camp about six, when I called the attendant trolley-men before me, told them of my proposed expedition, and promised them rewards for their trouble. They stoutly refused to come with me. They were not my subordinates, so I could take no notice of this. They were prepared, they said, to do any legitimate work, but would not risk their lives in accompanying me down the *ghaut* in the dead of night on such an errand. "Why," continued they, "our master, the Permanent Way Inspector, and even the District Engineer himself never trolley the *ghaut* after nightfall." My persuasions were of no avail; nothing would move them; so I resolved to take some of my own men, who knew how to manage the vehicle. On sounding them, they expressed their readiness to follow me even into the jaws of death; was I not their father and mother, and so on? Poor fellows! in extenuation for their after conduct, be it said they were simple villagers, and going after "varmints" at night did not constitute a clause in their contract. However.

When it was time to start, I loaded both barrels of my breech-loader, and ordered my four men to put the trolley on the rails. I doubled up a blanket, which I placed in the fore-part as a seat for myself. I had the hand-lamps—white, green, and red—replenished with oil, lighted them, turned on the shades, and placed them immediately behind me. To the rear of the lamps I installed my trustworthy *peon*, or messenger,

who had charge of my rifle, I having spare cartridges in my pocket. Then came the four improvised trolly-men, who squatted together at the end of the frame-work ; for, it being all down hill, their actual services would not be required till the return journey. The lever of the brake was handy on my right, and I consequently controlled the machine myself. The air was balmy, the moon shone brilliantly ; but the surroundings were weird in the extreme. The jungle, dense and impenetrable, grew within a few paces on either side of the way, and the line twisted in and out of the hills like a huge snake. My followers held a muttered conversation, but the monotonous clacking of the wheels as they passed the rail joints, and the "skirring" of the brake prevented me from catching what they said. Strange, uncanny sounds emanated from the jungle, and every now and then as we rounded a curve we saw animals trot across the line and down the bank into the dense undergrowth.

We had progressed about a mile when from our front came the sounds of snarling and growling ; but what caused them I was not experienced enough to tell.

Without turning my head, I whispered words of reassurance to my men, who now preserved a profound silence ; but, though feeling a little "queer" myself, I kept my eyes fixed to the front. A piece of straight and a break in the forest told me we were approaching the village. We traversed the straight. Now a curve lay before us, and I knew that after rounding it we should reach the level crossing-gate—the scene of my proposed operations. Slowly we entered upon the curve ; slowly we rounded it. There was the village ; there was the gate ; but there, on the Permanent Way, seated for all the world like a big cat, was—not a tiger, but his equal in ferocity, if not in size—a large cheetah ! I was about fifty paces from him. He turned and faced me. Quick as thought I jammed over the brake-lever with one hand and stopped our way, while, without removing my eyes from the animal, I extended my other hand behind me, into which, as previously arranged, my *peon* was to thrust my rifle. "Be quick !" I

muttered to the man in his own vernacular, as my itching fingers continued closing on nothing but empty air. What was he doing? Why did he not give me the rifle? Was he asleep?—also the others? I reiterated my order in a louder voice, but with no better result. I looked hurriedly behind me. *I was alone!*

III.

I CONFESS to having felt a lump in my throat as I realised the peril of my situation. Another quick glance rearward told me the rifle had gone too. Had I the piece, nothing would have been easier than to take a "pot" shot at the cheetah. The conditions all favoured the conclusion: the moon shone brightly; I was at a standstill; so was the beast—when I came upon him—and, comparatively, only a few yards divided us. I looked at him. He had crouched down; he faced me; his tail lashed the ground; his next step would be to creep towards me, and when within springing distance, he would launch himself on to me. Turning tail on my part would have been futile. What was I to do? It was not courage, it was not pluck that made me think of the lamps; they were behind me, my men had not carried them off. With my eyes fixed on the cheetah, I felt for those lamps. I took one (the green), turned off the shade, and placed it on my right. I groped for the next, which proved to be the red; I unmasked it and set it on my left. I noticed the effect on the cheetah. Though still *couchant*, he had raised his head, and stared at the coloured lights as if puzzled. Slowly, and without moving my eyes off the beast, I drew up my feet under me, gained an erect position, stepped aside, placed the third or white light where I had sat, kicked free the brake-lever, sprang back to the ground behind the trolley, gave it an impetus with all my strength, took two or three flying leaps, jumped on to the frame again, and charged down on the cheetah. He did not stay to meet me. The well-oiled axles, the gradient, and the "shove" which, with the energy of

despair—call it “funk,” if you like,—I had given it, sent the trolley flying, and I suppose the hurly-burly of the wheels, the three staring lights, and the silhouette of my form, standing on the charging trolley, all proved too much for my friend’s nerves, for, by the time I had come to within a few yards of him, he gathered himself up, and with a roar fled into the undergrowth.

But the adventures of the night did not conclude with the disappearance of the cheetah. Here I was, alone, and on an open line of railway, with a trolley which must be unshipped to allow the mail-train to pass. Could I do this single-handed? Was there time to run across to the silent, sleeping village and summon assistance? And would the timid villagers come at my bidding, though I was here on their behalf? I looked at my watch. A quarter to twelve. No, the train would be up before I could get back. I must dispose of the trolley myself, and be sharp about it. I first removed the three lamps, and deposited them in a place of safety on the side of the track; then, with the utmost difficulty, I managed to get the frame up on end, and, on pushing it over, it went toppling down the embankment. This was unfortunate; but I had no time to ruminate. Then came the removal of the two pairs of wheels, which, when done, ended my labours for the time being; though how I was going to get that trolley together again and how I was to get back to camp, I dared not think of. In due course a dull rumbling, presently supplemented by the puffing of the locomotive labouring up the *ghaut*, struck my ear; then the head-light of the train appeared round the curve, immediately followed by a prolonged whistle, and the train came to a stop. What was the matter? The line was clear. Could it be I had left some part of the trolley still in the way? I looked with all my eyes. No, everything was off. What in—— Hah! I saw it now! My lamps! I had left them where I had first placed them, and there they were, all three—red, white, and green,—blazing away in the eyes of the driver. No wonder he had pulled up! Rushing forward, I doused the coloured lights and frantically waved the white

lamp. A short, sharp whistle of acknowledgment replied, and on came the train. I had to run the gauntlet of hundreds of pairs of eyes, from the driver and fireman on the engine to the chief guard at the tail end; but I kept waving my light, so the train crept past me without further ado. I was bethinking me of making the best arrangements for passing the night where I stood, when I rejoiced to hear voices, and in a few minutes some of my men, under the leadership of my head-servant, made their appearance. The fellows who deserted me had been so terrified by the noises they heard that they had quietly slipped off the trolly, taking my rifle, and slunk back to camp. Of course their arrival without me created a commotion; my head-servant at once organised a search-party, and came in quest of me. The trolly was shipped, and without further adventure I reached my camp just in time to clear the line for the down train. The driver of the up mail had, on his arrival at the next station, reported the stoppage on the *ghaut*; but fortunately I was known to him personally, as also to the guard, and the station-master.

The Permanent Way Inspector, too, happened to be on the platform when the train drew up, so, on learning who it was that had shown three lights and had thus stopped Her Majesty's Mail, they agreed among themselves to say nothing about it, the driver, for his part, engaging to "make up" between that station and the next.

On my return journey some weeks subsequently, the inspector informed me that he had gone out after that cheetah, and shot him almost at the very spot I had seen him.

ON TIME.

BY MANLEY H. PIKE.

THE soldiers of Cascabel's Brigade, in the spring of 1864, had not found the war a glorious succession of battles, sieges, skirmishes, scouting expeditions, hand-to-hand fights and headlong charges. It was to them a very monotonous and wearisome experience. Great armies were contending only a score or two of miles distant, and every day brought news of a fresh battle ; but these unhappy fellows of Cascabel's Brigade, wild to be in action, were forced to stay out of it, month after month, in a soul-sickening stupor.

Far out to the south and west of the zone of active operations the brigade guarded the crossings in the rear of Sherman's extreme right wing, and was left farther and farther behind as the wing fought along toward Atlanta. General Cascabel commanded three regiments of infantry, one of cavalry, and a half-battery of artillery ; and these troops were scattered up and down the black, slow-flowing Sougahatchee River, with nothing to do but fight external mosquitoes and internal discontent, while the rest of their division were in the front of the advance into Georgia.

Into this state of things a great deal of delightful turmoil was brought when it was reported one day at the headquarters at Tooloosa Bluff that a hostile force, of unknown strength but supposed to be large, had been heard of on the south side of the river, moving in a direction which appeared to indicate an intention to force a passage across the stream.

What a deal of drumming, bugling, wheel-rattling and order-bawling followed this announcement ! Every one was jolly

and excited. Old General Cascabel's white moustache twitched with longing for battle. Young Lieutenant Gilderoy, his aid and military secretary, who had been in only one engagement and seen nothing of that one, immediately recollected that Major McLean still possessed his old captain's shoulder-straps, and would undoubtedly be willing to part with them to a promoted lieutenant.

But Gilderoy had little time for dreams of promotion. His chief's rapid orders forced Gilderoy's pen to a gallop, while aids and orderlies snatched the papers the moment they were signed and scurried away with them.

"We have no reason to suppose that these fellows will advance any farther," the general confided to Lieutenant Gilderoy. "But we must be ready for 'em."

Just then a horseman was heard to pull up outside the headquarters. In his anxiety for more intelligence the general threw aside punctilio, and hurried out to see who the new arrival might be. He returned looking troubled.

Without a word he sat down for a close examination of the map, whistling between his teeth, as was his habit when perplexed, and evidently pondering some difficult question.

Frank Gilderoy was in a fever of curiosity, but he was also a good soldier, and did not even look up from his work. At last the general spoke :

"Mr. Gilderoy !"

"Yes, sir." Frank rose and awaited directions.

"I find that force, which is twice as large as I was first informed, is making for the upper crossing. You know that Major Langridge and his four companies are at Wachee Landing, on the other side of the river. This movement will cut him off if he is not warned within five hours ; for he can't hold his position against such numbers, and must have time to break up and slip over the ferry. I want you to carry the message.

"You can't make the trip on horseback in sufficient season—the roads are very bad, the scout says. Go down to the river, and take one of the transport steamers—here's a requisition on

~~the~~ quartermaster. Get a sergeant and twenty men from your company for a guard, and be off at once. You must fetch Wachee by three o'clock, if you burst the boiler, remember that. Nothing more. 'Good-bye ; a pleasant journey, and a *quick* one ! "

Gilderoy fully understood that extreme haste was expected of him rather than caution. Twenty minutes later he marched Sergeant Sampson and twenty men of Company K on board the faster of the two steamers.

This craft was the usual light-draft stern-wheeler of the smaller Southern rivers. She was named the *Lucius P. Tomlinson*, but the soldiers had shortened her title down to *Lucy Tom*. She carried a captain, two pilots, two engineers and ten negro firemen and deck hands. She had nearly finished discharging a cargo of stores, and was supposed to be in trim to do her best.

"How are you off for fuel, captain?" inquired Frank, after he had taken charge.

"Not enough for the trip," answered the captain, "but I'll wood up at Pooler's plantation. We can make out that distance."

"All right, then. Let's get under way immediately."

The *Lucy Tom* began puffing swiftly up the Sougahatchee amid cheers and yells from the guard on board, who considered the excursion as a sort of picnic, the more agreeable from the spice of danger that was in it. Frank Gilderoy, too, felt proud and elated in his responsible charge as the bearer of a weighty and important message, with a steamer and thirty-odd men under his orders.

He calculated the time required to reach Wachee Landing at the rate the boat was going, and finding that it would bring him to his destination by half-past two, with half an hour to spare, he abandoned anxiety, and walked the deck in a self-satisfied manner.

But poor Gilderoy's good luck turned to bad with surpassing abruptness. Just as the steamer was pushing steadily up against the gentle current at an excellent rate of speed, there

was a great crash and rattle below. The engines whirled violently, then stopped, and the boat began to drift downstream, broadside on and helpless.

Down rushed Gilderoy to the lower deck. He found all hands—soldiers, captain, pilots, firemen and deck hands—crowded around the two engineers, who were explaining that connecting rod had broken, and that it would have smashed the engine to pieces had they not stopped when they did.

"What's to be done, captain?" asked the young officer, nervously, of the captain.

"Nothing. We've no small boats. We'll have to let her drift until we can get near enough to tie up to the bank somewhere."

"Well, and what then?"

"Why, we'll stay there, I reckon, while we send down to Tooloosa for a gang to come up and fix the rod."

"Can't the engineers fix it?"

"They ain't competent. It's a practical machinist's job."

Send down to Tooloosa for help! Lieutenant Gilderoy knew that it was impossible. The safety of Major Langridge's command, and what was much less important yet vital to him, his own honour and reputation as an officer, depended upon making the trip in time. The rod must be repaired somehow.

"Sergeant Sampson!" Frank called.

The sergeant saluted.

"Parade your men."

The twenty men were quickly drawn up in line.

"If any one of you knows anything about machinery, he will step one pace to the front."

Two men advanced and stood at attention. One proved to have been a machinist in Chicago; the other was an old railroad engineer.

"Go and see what you can do to repair the damage to this boat. Dismiss parade, sergeant."

It was always thus among the volunteers. Whatever emergency might arise, one could be reasonably sure of finding men, either among the officers or in the ranks, who were,

by previous occupation, fitted to deal with it. This was one of the advantages of an army of citizen soldiers.

Baxter and Rice, the two machinist soldiers, began to plan and tinker, assisted by the engineers, while the engine-deck was cleared and a sentinel posted there to prevent interference with their task. Meanwhile the steamer continued to drift down-stream.

As the captain had said, there was no way to remedy this until the bank was so nearly approached that a man could get ashore with a line. If they did not succeed in starting the engine again soon, they might be carried back to Tooloosa.

But a projecting mud-bank caught the boat on its point, and there she lay, immovable, but at least no longer losing ground.

Two hours passed, during which Gilderoy thought several times that he must surely go crazy. He tramped back and forth like a rope-maker, consulting his watch and constantly going over in his mind the ever-recurring calculation of hours, miles and rates of speed.

Finally, Baxter and Rice reported that they had fished and strapped up the rod in such a fashion that they felt sure something else would give way before it did.

The lieutenant ordered the engine started. Splash, splash went the great wheel. The men got out setting poles and pushed with all their might; and after a great deal of trouble, the craft slid off the shoal and once more proceeded up-stream.

But when Gilderoy again consulted his watch he could hardly believe he saw aright. Half-past twelve, and thirty odd miles to go!

"Captain," asked he, "what's the very best your boat can do?"

"Eleven or twelve, if she's driven."

"Then drive her—hard!"

The bell jingled "full speed," the black firemen piled wood into the furnaces, and the high-pressure engine responded with quicker and stronger coughs to the increased volume of steam.

The *Lucy Tom* was soon doing a good eleven miles an

four, but this was not enough. Frank Gilderoy thought of all he had ever read about the extraordinary expedients employed by foolhardy commanders in old-time Mississippi river races, and resolved that he would be as foolhardy as any of them.

"You must have hotter fires," said he. "Pile on some of that commissary bacon stored aft there."

"I won't do to," objected the captain. "It may set us afire or blow us up."

"Pile it on, I tell you!" rejoined the lieutenant sternly.

"Well, I won't, then!" roared the captain, in desperation. "I ain't going to risk my life, if you're fool enough to risk yours."

"You refuse to obey orders, do you?"

"Yes—such orders as that—every time, I do!"

"Sergeant Sampson!" called Gilderoy, in a quiet voice, "put this man under guard somewhere forward."

The sergeant was one of those old soldiers of fortune who have served under many a flag in many parts of the world. No command astonished or disconcerted him. Without the slightest look of surprise on his face, he marched the still-protesting captain off.

"I'm captain for the rest of this trip, men," announced Gilderoy to the boat-hands.

They had heard and seen what had passed. Staring at one another, they hesitated for an instant, and then, first the spare pilot, then the engineers, and all ten of the negroes left their places and went up to Gilderoy.

"If cap'n goes, we go, too," growled the pilot, as spokesman.

"Very well—and you shall go where he's gone, besides. Put all these men under guard, sergeant."

In another moment the pilot on duty abandoned the wheel, and was added to the group of prisoners. Gilderoy was firm. He saw what must be done, and he did it.

"Rice, you've been a locomotive engineer, you say. Can you and Baxter run this machine?"

"I think we can, sir. They're different from what I've been used to, but I guess we can manage it."

"Take the engines. Sergeant, tell off ten men to fire. I'll steer myself."

On went the *Lucy Tom*, her regular captain and crew scowling under five rifles held at the "ready," ten soldiers rushing in the wood and staving the bacon hogsheads, Rice and Baxter at the engines, Lieutenant Frank Gilderoy steering, and the six spare men awaiting further orders near by.

"It's a plain course," thought Frank; "there's but little current, the channel's good, without snags or bars. No trouble up here. It's the firing that will bother us."

And it began to bother them immediately. A perspiring private, stripped to his trousers, came up to say:

"Wood's most gone, lieutenant."

Gilderoy started. He had forgotten the short supply of fuel and the need of stopping to replenish it at Pooyer's plantation, which now lay two miles astern. Moreover, the time required to "wood up" could not be spared, as things were. They would arrive too late, even now, without the most strenuous exertions. But what could he do?

But assistance came from an unexpected quarter. For the first time in his life, Sergeant Sampson ventured to advise his superior officer.

"Lieutenant, there's a lot of bunks and furniture in the cabin," said he, saluting stiffly, "and a pile of hardtack in boxes."

"Good," cried Frank. "Take these men and break up the wood. And fill the furnaces chock up, remember, with plenty of bacon on."

Off went the party. A loud smashing heard soon after showed that they were not slow in obedience.

"We may do it yet," hoped Frank.

Next came Rice, looking serious.

"Steam's wastin' badly, sir," said he. "We can't make the speed you want unless we weight the safety-valve. Perhaps you know what chances we'll take if we do it."

"Yes, I know. But do it, Rice."

Rice disappeared. He called young Terence Mahony, the

ghostly man in the squad, and soon had him sitting in a rope being fastened to the safety-valve lever—a terrible situation for the most courageous. But the brave Irish boy joked merrily about “th’ foine shwing” he was enjoying while the others had to work, and incessantly urged the firemen to “poole her up, and lift him, ef they could.”

They tried hard to “lift him”—and themselves. Crash went axes and handspikes, and the splintered fragments, passed along a line of men, were hurried into the furnaces by four stout fellows who never once stopped to take breath or to wipe away the sweat that poured from their inflamed faces and half-blinded them.

The boat was doing twelve and a half—her very utmost; and if this rate could be maintained, Major Langridge would be warned in time. But every one knew that she might never arrive at all, so tremendous was the strain to which the boilers were being subjected.

The whole fabric of the steamer shook and quivered and groaned under the racking jar of the swiftly revolving wheel, and the steam-gage indicator moved up and up until it showed many pounds of pressure beyond the safety-point. The tall chimneys, pouring out immense gushes of smoke, often belched clear fire a yard above their indented tops, and grew so hot that they shed great flakes of paint upon the deck. It was impossible to stand within six feet of them.

Still the axes swung, and still the fuel was flung upon the raging fires.

“More wood wanted, sir!”

“Down with those upper-deck cabins!”

Down they came. The bacon was gone by this time, but several casks of mess pork and a barrel or two of oil supplied its absence.

Then came a man shouting, “She’s afire around the chimneys!”

Here was a quandary. Every available pair of hands was already employed. Yet that fire must be extinguished. Gilderoy quickly solved the problem.

"Below there, guard!" shouted he, from the pilot-house window. "Run those prisoners up here at the double!"

Up came the fifteen men before the persuading bayonets.

"You see that fire, do you? Well, if you won't work for us, you'll work for yourselves. If that blaze keeps on, we'll all be roasted alive—you as well as the rest. Now, will you turn to and put it out?"

For answer they sprang to the work. Mutinous and angry as they were, they could easily see that it was their only chance to save their lives.

With one party labouring to prevent the steamer from being burned, and another doing all they could to make her burn, and a third tearing the unfortunate craft to pieces—the steamer went rushing on.

"Sure, if iver there was such a thing as liftin' one's self by th' sthraps of one's boots we're a-doin' that same!" commented Mahony, calmly swinging on the safety-valve lever.

A few minutes later, the pickets at Wachee informed Major Langridge, who had as yet heard nothing of the enemy's approach, that some kind of fire-ship was coming up river, "like greased lightning." Not knowing what this might mean, the major ordered the long roll sounded, and everything prepared for any possible attack by land or water. Soon after, the *Lucy Tom* swung around the bend, a mere mass of fire and smoke, and "snubbed up" to the bank, with roaring escape-pipe—for Terence Mahony had just been ordered from his post.

From the deck a young fellow, in the blackened remnants of what had once been a smart lieutenant's uniform, leaped ashore, ran up to the major, saluted, and said, "Orders from the general, Major Langridge."

Then he looked at his watch. It was precisely three o'clock; and Langridge's command was saved.

THE NIGHT OF DARKNESS.

BY GEO. MANVILLE FENN.

I.

HIS Most Christian Majesty King Louis XIII. of France was at the Castle of Chambord in the rainy, melancholy spring of 1638.

It was towards the evening of a saddening April day when Gaston de Saveuses, a representative of the chivalry and thought of those days, rode up to the gates of the famous castle, the abode just then of a grief which to glance at even now, after the space of more than two centuries and a half, brings tears to the eyes.

He walked his tired horse the last few yards.

Saveuses had been a distinguished member of the privileged circle while the Court was at the Tuileries Palace six months before : but now the gaiety had departed from the vast salons of the Royal residence on the Seine ; the sound of music was heard no more ; there was emptiness there ; there was desolation. Was it to endure for ever ?

The young man dismounted at the gates of the château, and there was some parleying with the portal guards, who fetched their officer ; but at length Saveuses was admitted.

"You are favoured, monsieur," said the officer, "if you are really privileged to see the King."

Saveuses smiled ; but speedily the worn, anxious, grey look which was to have been remarked before returned to his face.

The officer continued, as he put his left hand on his hip,—

"The Cardinal left yesterday for the South. I suppose you

have heard? His Eminence did not, I fear, do His Majesty much good. And we continue to be mewed up here. I wish the Court would go back to Paris."

"But the King is ill."

"Why, of course His Majesty is ill. *Dieu!* Is it not enough to make him ill—this place in the wet? Give me brilliancy and dancing. I hate the silent country. B-r-r-r!"

"Ah! we must hope," said Saveuses; and he followed the officer into the castle, where he was handed over to a captain of the King's bodyguard, who removed his brown leather gauntlet as he took Saveuses' pass.

"I had permission from His Majesty," he said to this latter officer, Paul de Rolaincourt, "to ask for audience at Chambord."

The captain conducted him to a salon, where the Chamberlain—the Duc de Villars—came forward to meet Saveuses.

"The King was just going to supper," said the Duc courteously; "but he will see you first."

Saveuses bowed, saying, "His Majesty is very good," and the Duc conducted him through several salons, and at length stopped before a curtained door, where a lieutenant of the Musketeers stood on duty.

The lieutenant made way, and the Duke parted the curtains, saying,—

"Your Majesty, the Comte de Saveuses is here." While, as he spoke, Gaston heard a peevish voice inside say,—

"That is right, Savar. Play again."

But when the Duc and the Comte entered, the King, by a wave of the hand, dismissed his old musician.

Louis received Saveuses graciously, and the Comte bowed low over the Royal hand.

"You have come to cheer our solitude," said the King.

"To assure Your Majesty of my undying devotion."

"We will talk," said the King, "to-night. You will take supper with me. But no mournful visages, if you please, monsieur. I know your errand. We will see; we will see. You love Mademoiselle de Maucourt, and she is affianced

by the Cardinal to Herselaines. It is not enough that I, the King, am your friend! But no melancholy! I like those by whom I am surrounded to be lively and bright."

Saveuses bowed.

"You know, Saveuses," the King went on, with that charm of manner, that *bonhomie* which he knew so well how to adopt at times—"you know that it may be the common lot, this fate of yours. Despair is the heritage of all."

In silence Saveuses followed the King in to supper; the *maitre d'hôtel* and his *aides* stood near another doorway, and the table was brilliant with lights and flowers.

"Sit there," said the King—"in front of me."

The supper proceeded.

After a long pause the King raised a glass of Alicante to his eyes.

"To your health," he said. "Let us forget the world—forget that Mademoiselle de Maucourt is in question."

"As I live, Sire," said Saveuses, "I would die for you; but while I live I cannot forget that I love her. Before Heaven I would swear it."

"Peace! peace! You are so deadly in earnest. By-and-by you will learn to be calm, to be indifferent to all things. You are young. The world will go round all the same, no matter what happens."

The King had risen from the table and taken a pace or two, but suddenly he paused in his moody walk up and down, in which he was followed by the interested gaze of a green parrot in a gilt cage.

"Saveuses, my friend, what can I do? The Cardinal says that Mademoiselle de Maucourt is to marry the Comte de Herselaines."

"But, Sire, you do not say it."

The King stroked his beard, and the young man continued impulsively,—

"You are the King, Sire; your word is law, from the Channel to the Middle Sea; and, Sire," and he dropped on one knee, "it was arranged a month ago that Violette and I

should be married. Why should it be changed now? The Cardinal would acquiesce if you spoke. We love each other, Sire, and better death than that our hopes should be destroyed. The world, this spring, all beautiful France—my country that I love,—all that is nothing if Violette and I are to be parted for ever."

The King gazed mournfully at the speaker for a time.

"But your King—you love me?" he asked at length.

"Sire, my life is in your hands; but you do not want it; and Violette and I have loved each other for years. I helped her to fish in the old stream at Conversans, and she fell in near the old mill. I saved her then, and she promised me that I should be her husband. I have always thought of her."

"Saveuses, you seek for happiness; and happiness—do you not know it?—is denied to all of us mortals. It is inscrutably ordained that we shall go down to the grave in tears."

He returned to his seat and the Comte sighed.

"It seems to me as if the morning light would never come, that next summer will never be reached, that the blue sky, the gardens of the world, the sounds of the morning, are all empty—of no account. If there is no hope, Sire, give me some duty which will take me to my death."

"This ham with pistachio nuts is delicious," said the King calmly, as if he had heard none of the frenzied words of Saveuses.

"Your Majesty," he continued, "she was my betrothed, and because she has lands the Cardinal has given her to his favourite; but you, who are lord of all France, can prevent that injustice—can save her from something worse than death. Say that word, Sire, I beg. It is in her eyes that I see all the world."

"I will that you be happy," said the King at last.

Saveuses dropped on his knees before the Majesty of France

"Thanks, Sire; thanks."

"The Cardinal must, then," said Louis musingly, "forego his plan of marrying Mademoiselle de Maucourt to Herselaines."

Saveuses kissed the King's hand.

Then Louis rose and signed to an officer who was standing at the far end of the vast apartment.

"I will write an order," he said.

When the materials were brought the King wrote a despatch to the Cardinal de Richelieu, the substance of which was a statement of the King's good pleasure that Mademoiselle de Mautcourt should wed Saveuses, and that the Royal will was unchangeable in this respect.

The document concluded as follows:—

"Given at our Court at Chambord on this 16th day of April, 1638. Dieu et le Roi."

The document was tied with silken cord and fastened with green wax.

That night Saveuses stood at the window of his chamber and glanced out at the wonderful panorama below him: the moon was lighting up wood, meadow, stream, and the mountains far away.

"The world is mine again!" he exclaimed, and, throwing himself on the bed, he slept peacefully till dawn.

These events happened during the stay of the King of France at Chambord in a fit of melancholy—that abiding *ennui* which totally incapacitated the "Just King" from any active participation in affairs of State. Yet, though just, it was he who abandoned Cinq Mars and de Thou.

The following morning early Saveuses, without re-seeing the King, quitted Chambord. It was brilliant April, with a light blue sky.

II.

In those days the Cardinal's spies were busy everywhere in the service of their would-be omniscient master, and the news was not long in reaching the ear of Armand Duplessis that his scheme was in jeopardy.

With his usual celerity at coming to a resolution, on hearing that the disappointed lover had obtained Royal sanction to override his plans, Richelieu, who found time to negotiate

politics of the smallest domestic nature as well as those of an international description, sent instructions to Gamaches, where Violette, the heiress of Maucourt, was undergoing a sort of honourable captivity prior to her enforced marriage with the Comte de Herselaines, that the nuptials were to take place forthwith—a circumstance which would not have hastened Saveuses in his ride to Gamaches, since that was impossible, but which would have rendered him distracted with feverish anxiety to be in time.

Gamaches was situated ten miles to the east of Saumur, and on the day previous to that in which the foregoing incidents took place Violette was terrified by the news that her future husband, the Comte de Herselaines, had arrived there. She dreaded seeing him again—he was a man to be detested—and yet at any moment she might be required to meet him, for Herselaines, with the Cardinal's authority behind him, had not reached the castle secretly by night with a few companions but had ridden up to the gates in the daytime and been admitted by the Cardinal's representative in charge.

As she had anticipated, she received an intimation that Victor de Herselaines desired to see her, and that notwithstanding her vehement indignation at his pertinacity when he had pursued her with his attentions a few months earlier at a levee at the Palais Cardinal.

He affected a mock obsequiousness in addressing her, and in the tone in which he said,—

"Mademoiselle, my lord the Cardinal has digned to fix on to-morrow for making me the happiest man in the world."

Violette turned deathly pale and drew back in alarm.

"What do you mean?" And as the words escaped her the idea that there was not a moment to be lost flashed through her mind. She would escape from that castle, however well guarded it might chance to be.

"Mademoiselle," said Herselaines with oily suavity, "His Eminence has arranged that our marriage shall be celebrated to-morrow."

‘Know, then, monsieur,’ she said haughtily, ‘that never in my life will I consent to marry you.’

‘I can only trust, mademoiselle,’ answered de Herselaines, ‘that you will come to a better frame of mind by to-morrow’s morn.’

With that he quitted the apartment, and Violette tremblingly thought of the fate which was in store for her.

What should she do? If only Gaston were near! But since her guardian had at the Cardinal’s order immured her at Gamaches she had heard nothing of him.

For the rest of the day she remained in a condition of fear and doubt.

The evening wore away, and the soft April night was already far advanced ere she dreamed of bed. The thought of escape had presented itself to her again and again; but the idea of energetic action gradually faded, giving place to a state of dull apathy—the notion that Fate would intervene to save her, that Heaven would allow something to happen, that despite herself she would be released from that captivity.

‘If only Gaston would come!’

She would never marry Herselaines—he was odious in her eyes. Better death. But the marriage was fixed for to-morrow. If help was to come, it should be soon.

Before going to bed she went to the window and glanced out at the moonlit panorama. She could not escape; but would not Gaston endeavour to rescue her? And as she thought of him it seemed to her—though was it not only a freak of the imagination?—that from far away beyond that castle and the courtyard where the guard was being changed, away towards Romorantin and the great forest of the Somme, there came faintly the sound of a horse’s hoofs—*thud, thud, thud*, on sodden grass and the broken, blinded woodland ways, gradually becoming clearer, more detachable and distinct, amidst the whispers of the night. But yet it would be nothing—a chance horseman, that was all.

Then, turning away from the window, there came that idea

of death—death on the morrow. It would be her friend if all else failed.

She was startled out of her reverie by a tap at the door.

"Mademoiselle !"

"Yes ; come in."

Rosine her maid entered.

"Can I do anything, mademoiselle ?"

"You might light the candles on that table."

The girl did as she was told, and then she lingered, as if desirous to say something.

Mademoiselle Maucourt looked at her inquiringly.

"What is it ?"

The girl went up to her and took her mistress's hand.

"My dear, dear lady," she said, "you are unhappy ; you are in tears."

Violette was about to reply, when there came in through the open window a soft whistle ; then another, and another.

"What is that ?" said Violette, trembling.

Rosine went up to the casement and glanced out.

"Oh, mademoiselle !" she cried.

"What is it ? What is the matter ?"

Rosine could scarcely speak for emotion.

"Ah, mademoiselle, my dear, dear mistress !"

"But what do you mean ? Why do you not speak ?"

"It is Monsieur de Saveuses, mademoiselle."

"Gaston !" exclaimed the girl, shaking herself free from the apathetic state into which she was sinking, as she rushed to the window and gave a cry of inexpressible relief and joy.

"Gaston ! Gaston !"

Just below, in the dim light, stood de Saveuses, booted, spurred, his cloak travel-stained and worn. The window was only some twelve feet from the ground, and the Comte, by means of the ivy growing on the wall, drew himself up and sprang lightly into the room.

"I am in time, dearest," he said. "Dear love, I am not too late !"

She fell, almost fainting, into his arms.

"You will come with me?" he whispered.

"Gaston," she said, trying to realise the truth again, "you will risk your life by coming here. You must not remain."

"Violette," he exclaimed, "I have come to take you away."

She gave him a frightened look.

"They will never let me go."

"But the King's order is here;" and he tapped his breast.

"The Cardinal, they say, is more powerful than the King."

"But it is night, and we are alone—you belong to me. Nothing else in the wide world is of any moment. It is all meaningless apart from you."

"Yes, Gaston, yes, I love you too. But if you remain it will be death to you; and though for me the end may be near, I wish you to live;" and she lightly touched his hair.

"You? It cannot be——"

"But to-morrow," she said, with a strain of infinite sadness in her voice, "it is decreed by the Cardinal, his master, that I am to marry this man. It is the will of the priest who rules France. But, Gaston, though we can never be happy in this world, I shall be true to you. I will never wed another—I will die."

"It shall never be—never!" he cried excitedly, and he passionately kissed her again and again. "The world would cease for me; you know it would. You will come with me. My horse is waiting. I have the King's order here. Dearest, by the morning you shall be safe—safe from every danger, far away."

"But the guards?"

"The guards! The guards are blind. Violette, I have lived in despair—oh, for months."

The girl turned to a crucifix on the wall.

"And I," she said softly. "Have not I suffered too? Gaston, these months of separation have been sad for me. I prayed to the good God for courage and for hope. I have prayed to Him for you."

But even as she spoke there came the quick realisation of the insincerity of her words of resignation. A vision of

horror presented itself to her, while here was salvation ready to her hand; and as he continued to urge her, she turned to him excitedly at last.

"Yes, Gaston, yes, I will come—I will come—now. Take me away. I fear for what may happen. I do not want to die."

He drew her towards him and kissed her passionately.

"But there is Rosine; we shall leave her."

The pretty *soubrette* made a gesture of contempt.

"As for that, mademoiselle," she said, with a toss of her pretty head, "fear nothing for me. But quick, monsieur; some one is passing by!"

Saveuses listened and realised that the girl's words were true.

"Come," he said.

"You will save me?"

Violette clung to him tremblingly.

"Dearest, have faith in me. I would die for you. By the morning you shall be safe."

But further parley was cut short by Rosine, who had been listening at the door.

"Mademoiselle, monsieur, they come! There is not a moment to lose," she cried feverishly. "They must have seen you, monsieur. Fly, fly!" And as she spoke the devoted girl snatched up a cloak and put it round her mistress's shoulders.

"Who is it?" whispered Violette.

"It must be Monsieur de Herselaines—yes, mademoiselle, it is."

For a voice without was heard, saying,—

"Will mademoiselle see me a moment?"

Violette made an angry gesture.

"Impossible, monsieur," replied Rosine.

"Why?"

"Mademoiselle is retiring to rest;" and Rosine drew back from the door.

But there was an impatient knocking on the panels.

Saveuses led Violette to the window, tore off his cloak, and by the help of his dagger ripped off two long strips. These

he knotted together, and added his scarf, one end of which he fastened round the trembling girl's waist:

"If they take us you will be killed," she whispered.

"Never. Trust me."

The girl ceased to protest, and he lifted her in his arms and lowered her down; then, grasping the thick trunk of the ivy, he slipped lightly to the ground. As they made their way to the gate beyond which his horse was tethered, there were footsteps in the semi-darkness, and they stepped into the shadow of the wall. A trooper came quite near, with a rolling, drunken gait, muttering to himself.

"You are not afraid?" whispered Saveuses, as the footsteps died away.

"No," she answered calmly.

As he spoke the still softness of the night was broken by the deep tones of a bell. The girl gave an involuntary shiver.

"Yet His Majesty is your friend," she whispered; "and he will protect us."

"Yes," he said sadly, "the King is my friend; but the King is lying ill at Chambord, and can take no heed now of what is passing around." Then he stepped out of the shadow, reached the postern, passed quickly through it, and gained his horse's side.

"Good old friend!" he said, patting the animal's neck. Then he drew his sword half out of his scabbard and thrust it back again, to make sure that it was in readiness. "You need fear nothing now," he said; "my horse is equal to anything."

The horse ceased cropping the grass as he mounted, and, raising Violette, who clung to him, he placed her before him and turned his horse's head to the west.

As Gaston rode off over the soft sward there was a blaze of torches at the window, and as he passed out of the deep shadow a voice exclaimed,—

"There he is!"

"Fire, then," exclaimed some one else.

"It would be no use. See, he is protected by the trees."

"Then quick to your horses."

Before long some half-dozen horsemen, headed by Hersclaines, were in pursuit. Unfortunately the start gained proved to be but little use, since Saveuses was forced to make a *détour* to gain the road ; and this compelled him to ride past the main entrance of the castle, from which his enemies were hurrying as he flashed by, and after a few minutes of rapid pursuit de Saveuses heard the hoarse cry of Hersclaines behind,—

“Stop, or I fire !”

Hersclaines was almost at his elbow, sword in one hand, pistol in the other ; but Saveuses urged forward his horse, and the noble animal swept onward.

Hersclaines fired ; but his pistol-ball seemed to have passed harmlessly, and when the castle had been left a mile behind Saveuses felt that he could laugh at his pursuers.

“My darling, you are safe,” he whispered.

The girl clung to him tightly as the horse tore onward through a glade and then flashed like the wind across a tract of open gorse country. Far behind the shouts of the pursuing force were fading fast away. But for some miles, fearing to be outflanked, Saveuses forced the pace. The country was here rough and broken, there quiet pasture land. At last, late in the night, he drew rein on a little knoll. He knew the country well. They were on the road to Vimeu and Provins : the church tower of Conversans showed up faintly in the dim light.

A few minutes rest, and the ride was resumed ; but the Comte glanced anxiously at his horse as it plodded on through the failing shadows of the night.

The dawn was reddening the eastern sky when the Castle of Vimeu came in sight. Violette had been silent for some time. At the gates of the castle her lover dismounted and carried his charge to a seat in the gateway. Turning a moment, he looked at his charger, for the horse gave a trembling sigh, sank to its knees, and then fell over on to its side ; and as the sun just peered over the horizon it gazed wildly up at its rider, whinnied, and breathed its last—Hersclaines’ pistol-ball had pierced its neck.

"For your master's sake," said Gaston ; and tears stood in his eyes as he stood a moment, hat in hand.

The great Cardinal was furious for a time when he heard that Violette and de Saveuses had been married in the grand salon of the Château of Vimeu ; but luckily the troubles with Spain occupied much of His Eminence's time, and the King's mandate prevailed, Violette de Maucourt peacefully becoming the châtelaine of the old seat of the Saveuses in fair Touraine.

MY STRANGE STORY.

BY JACOB HIRAM HONGOAR.

MY fancy goods store used to be in Pegram's Block, the eleven-story building on the short and busy street called Pegram's Place in this good city of Boston. Pegram's Block was formerly but seven stories in height.

The day before they began to tear up the old pitch-and-gravel roof, preparatory to adding four stories more, I went up there to see once more a scene that had become familiar to me. For ten years my habit had been to go out on the roof every fine evening. My sitting-room and bedroom were in the fifth story. I am not a married man, but that is not my fault.

If I wanted to marry any girl, she could not hear me say so. If any girl were willing to marry me, I could not hear her admitting it. I am a deaf-mute.

Born so? No. Scarlet fever did it when I was eight years old. That wasn't my fault, either.

I might have married a deaf-mute, but I do not think two deaf-mutes should marry. Mr. Abdiel K. Jones tells me there is no use giving my reasons for that opinion. Another time will do better. What he wants me to do now is to write out the story of my strange adventure on Pegram's Block roof.

When Mr. Jones told me he wished me to write out the story myself, I said I couldn't.

"Why not?" he inquired.

"I can't make it read like a story," said I.

"I don't want you to. I want you to write just the plain truth."

"I'll tell you, and you write it," said I.

"No, I want you to do it."

"Well, I'll try."

"That's right," said Mr. Jones. "You got on by trying things people said you couldn't do. Keep on trying."

Mr. Jones and I talk with our fingers, but he is not deaf nor dumb. He was my teacher from the time I lost my voice and ears. He is my teacher now, though I have a big business to attend to.

I should like to write out how I got along in business. I told Mr. Jones so.

He said, "The right way is to begin at the start. The story of your start is the very thing I want. And it's the story of your start in business, too."

Come to think of it, that's true. Here goes, then :

I used to be a roofer. That was just after I left the asylum on Blassette Avenue. Mr. Jones taught me there for seven years. Then he said I ought to be earning my living. I was glad then. He got me the job. I went at it before I was sixteen.

My boss was Mr. Flaherty, the gravel-roofing contractor. All I had to do was keep the caldron of pitch boiling and full. But I helped in other ways all I could. I liked to help, and the men never objected.

That was real kindness to me. As a successful business man, I want to state right here that the man who puts some of his own work off on a boy may be a good friend to the boy, though he's not likely to be much of a man. Many of Flaherty's roofers liked to befriend me in that way.

When I was nearly seventeen my boss got the contract for putting a tar and gravel roof on Pegram's Moral Museum.

Perhaps some people in Boston don't know that Pegram's Block was first a museum. When Pegram failed, Barnum bought his stock of Moral Curiosities cheap at auction.

"I guess I'll take you with the lot, Pegram," said Barnum, and he hired the old man. So the papers said at the time. I remember it well.

Old Pegram was a smart man. The trouble was he was too smart. He was always going in for big things ahead of the times. Before the roof was half on he had three polar bears and the "only walrus ever on exhibition" in his immense front window.

There they were, cool as you please, on the first of July. Pegram had fixed up a wall of big blocks of ice in the back of the window, and more was melting overhead. To see that biggest polar bear clawing up fish was a wonder.

If any Boston people remember that as well as I do, they can testify what crowds came the first week or two to see the free moral show in the window—especially at noon. It seemed as if thousands of clerks in stores, working girls, mechanics, ladies, and business men, too, used to hurry over at dinner time to look at the free entertainment.

The second of July the roof was going on in a great hurry. There were so many men at work on top that there was no room for heating pitch up there. It was boiled in two big caldrons in the street. Then we hauled it up by rope and pulley in little caldrons.

There were four of these. When full of pitch one of them would weigh three or four hundred pounds, I daresay. I looked like an extra big stovepipe with an extra little stove pipe going up alongside of it.

The little stovepipe connected with a sort of flat stove under the big one. In this we made fire sometimes to keep the pitch hot while it was waiting to be used. The whole thing hung on a handle something like what a wooden pail handle would be if it was fastened on nearly as low as the middle of the pail.

Only the handle of the caldron was like a V upside down.

At the top of the handle was a rope which passed over pulley in the arm of a fixed derrick planted on the roof. When the men hoisted up a boiling caldron, it almost touched the sheet iron rain-trough or cornice-gutter along the front of Pegram's Block.

Flaherty's men at the street caldrons always warned the

people to stand from under when the hot pitch was going up ; but none ever fell. The caldron was kept from possible tipping by a spring on each side that the handle set into. When we wanted to pour hot pitch out of the caldron we had to press in the springs.

At half past twelve on the second of July I was the only person on the roof. I had eaten my dinner with the other men on the vacant sixth floor, and come up again to put a little fire under a caldron.

This caldron had been hauled up while twelve was striking. There it hung, clear of the cornice, right over the sidewalk. The other end of the rope was passed round a cleat twenty feet back from the front.

I put in some fire, though the pitch was still very hot. Then I sat down in the rain gutter. My feet were dangling more than a hundred feet above the crowd below. If I did that now I should have creepy feelings in the soles of my feet and up my back, I guess ; but in those days I was used to working on high places. The rain-trough was a very wide and deep one, for it had to carry off the water from half of Pegram's immense roof. I could sit in it comfortably. My back was against the edge of the roof itself.

When I wished to look very straight down I held on by my two hands to the edge of the rain-trough, and bent over till I could see the shine of the plate-glass seven stories below, and right under my backbone.

I was watching the straw hats and parasols of the crowd looking at Pegram's moral walrus and polar bears. Hot and sort of dusty was the glare of sunshine beating down on the pavement. No one was looking up at me.

In the upper windows of the ladies' restaurant across the street I could see women at their dinners. They often leaned out, gazing two stories down on the crowd, while I looked five stories down on them.

Incessantly the people pressed, shifted and changed around the two street caldrons of boiling pitch, whence pungent smoke, rolling straight up in the windless air, became thin

and blue, and waveringly vanished in the sunlit atmosphere before ascending to my elevation.

Sometimes the people crammed closer, leaving the street railway tracks clear for the passage of a car. The solitary policeman then moved along the lane with an air of being indulgent to all his fellow-beings.

It amused me to note how some boys and men rapidly elbowed their way to the front, while more lost ground in cunning attempts to get ahead by pressing to one side or the other, as they fancied they saw an easier passage. Most of the people took position at the rear, and were stolidly pressed up to the front in their turn, as the van constantly melted away and the rear was incessantly renewed.

So goes life. To get to the front speedily one must keep shoving straight ahead, and know how.

I liked to see so much movement. People coming along the two great thoroughfares at the ends of Pegram's Place would see the crowd and hurry to join it. Some hastened away as soon as they found what occasioned the throng.

There was a constant going ⁱⁿ and coming out at store doors; people nodding to their acquaintances; a few stopping and shaking hands. To me on high with sealed ears they seemed like so many puppets out of our asylum pantomime all going round alive.

I wondered what it would be like if my ears were suddenly made good. The sounds of a city I have never heard, for I was a country child before I became a deaf-mute.

One man, threading his way through the throng, caught and held my attention. To and fro, deviously, snake-like he went, often turning his head toward the policeman, sometimes stopping and looking indifferently around. At these times I could not see his hands, but I guessed they were picking pockets.

He excited me. I longed to be able to cry out, "Stop thief!"

In my excitement I leaned over a little too far. Instantly I was dizzy with the fear of falling. After an unbalanced

moment, my clutch at the outer rim of the iron gutter saved me, and I sat back, trembling.

Soon the tremor passed. I looked down again. The pick-pocket was still busy. It made me angry to see him robbing the people, all so busy and trustful of one another. I rose to go to the other roofers and point out the thief. As I stood up and stooped for another look, a little pebble rolled off the turned-up edge of my soft felt hat. My eyes followed its fall. It struck a straw hat and bounded to another. Two men looked up. I suppose they said something, as they pointed. All the people suddenly looked up at me.

Instantly they began to disperse. I suppose the smoking caldron of pitch just above my shoulder scared them. The pick-pocket looked most alarmed, and rapidly made off round the corner.

I was a bashful boy, and the sudden uplooking of so many eyes dazed me a little. Nervously I stepped back, and walked up to the ridge. On my way back I stumbled over the cleat around which the pulley-rope went with two hitches. Without noticing that I had disarranged the tie, I went on down to the edge.

The crowd was smaller than before, but constantly growing. None seemed there who had looked up at me. At least there were now no upturned faces. I looked down again on a street whose pavement was hidden by hats and parasols.

The pitch beside me was boiling with the little fire I had set under it. To stop the ferment, I lifted a block of pitch which weighed about four pounds from the roof, and gently placed it in the caldron. Instantly the smoking vessel began to descend.

The small additional weight had been enough to begin drawing the disturbed rope through the cleat twenty feet behind me.

I grasped at the handle of the caldron. It stopped. My lifting power was more than enough to restore the disturbed equilibrium.

I looked round at the cleat. It was clear that the rope lay so that it might, if further drawn out, give way at any instant and let the boiling caldron fall into the throng.

More than one might be killed by the heavy vessel, and how many hideously wounded by the scalding and sticky mass!

My hands were already deeply burned, for the handle where I had to grasp it, near the edge of the caldron, was hot.

I seized my soft hat with my left hand. At that the caldron began to descend again. With my right hand alone I could not keep it from falling.

I dared not jump back and attempt to get a better hitch on the cleat. The hot pitch might be down among the people before I could seize the rope on the roof.

My hat was now between my two hands and the hot handle. That was a relief. But my burned palms were soon less painful than the strain on my back, neck, arms and legs.

I know now that I must have lifted with all my strength, because I was wild with horror at what might happen to the people below in consequence of my carelessness. Out over the edge I had to lean, that my lifting might be straight upward. I could not put a foot forward to get a better balance for my body, without stepping into blank air.

All my force had to be exerted as I stood in the rain-trough, my arms held straight before me, my shoulders bent forward toward the vessel. At any instant, if I nervously started, I might pitch over and down into that mass of women, children and men along with the seething black mass whose acrid smoke drifted into my nostrils.

I thought of swaying the caldron on to the roof as two strong men were accustomed to do before tipping its contents into pails. But that feat was wholly beyond my strength. The two men were always assisted by a third, who held the rope around the cleat so that he might stop it if anything went wrong.

Let any one who wants to get a clear idea of my position hold a heavy weight straight out before him with his two arms extended at the height of his shoulders. In this torturing attitude my strength soon began to fail, and my arms to tremble. Every muscle of my back, neck and legs was strained in agony.

Yet I could not wholly check the caldron's descent. It slowly went down. The rope slowly paid out. Very slowly, understand. It had gone down six inches when I knew it was still falling very slowly, but not so slowly as at first.

'God help me! God help me!' I kept thinking. "God, take my life alone, and help me to save the innocent people away down below."

Of all the thousand that I could see not one looked up. Some pigeons suddenly flew and, fluttering, settled on the roof of the restaurant across the street, four stories lower than I. They preened themselves in the hot sunshine, strutted a little, looked down at the crowd, and flew suddenly away. I turned my head, looking along the roofs for aid. Not a soul was to be seen on any of them. A photographer standing in a skylight across the block three hundred yards away was calmly taking up and examining his row of prints. His side face was toward me.

Looking far past him I could see the clock face in the white steeple of Park Street Church, by the Common. The time was four minutes to one.

The men must be already coming up to work. But I could not hold on one minute longer. My brain was reeling again with the sensation of height, and my whole body was trembling.

Again I looked down. Such was the anguish of my longing to shout to the people that I know I tried. Now children on their way to school had, in large numbers, joined the throng.

Suddenly the two men employed at the street caldrons came out from the Museum. One looked up. My face and posture must have frightened him. He threw up his hands, and no doubt shouted. The whole crowd looked up at me. I thought how the pitch would fall on the uplifted faces, for now I *knew* I must drop down in a few seconds.

Next moment the people were flying apart as if an explosion had scattered them. Still I tried to hold up the caldron. The last thing I remember is seeing old Pegram at the back

of the crowd that had halted, I could not tell how far away. He shook his fist furiously at me.

All at once I understood that they supposed I had flung down the pitch. For it was gone. I stood on the roof edge, staggered, and fell.

I fell back on the nearly flat roof. When I came to my senses a policeman was waiting to take me to the station on the charge of having attempted wholesale murder. Pegram brought it against me.

Nobody had been hurt. The old man was infuriated by the spattering of pitch over his great show window. For me—I saw clearly that the evidence was nearly all against me. The rope had been left fastened; it had come undone, and who but I had been on the roof?

The most sensational paper then in Boston declared, in half a column of delirious head-lines, that I hated my fellow-beings because they could hear and talk while I was deaf and mute.

Mr. Abdiel Jones got me out of that trouble by translating my sign language in open court, and calling attention to the cracked, bleeding and swollen fingers, burned nearly to the bone, with which I told my tale.

He and all my friends at the asylum, as well as my boss Flaherty and his foreman, testified to my good character. See the value of a good character. So I was declared not guilty.

Then the sensational paper turned round and advertised me as a hero. The other papers said so, too, though I have never been able to see why.

So it came about that I got a big custom from the very next day, when Mr. Pegram set me up with a stock of fruit and knick-knacks in the big Museum door. This was his way of showing he was sorry for charging me falsely.

From that I got along, adding one thing to another, and at last renting half of Pegram's Block, till now I am greatly blessed with this world's goods, and able to help Mr. Abdiel Jones's plans for educating my fellow-sufferers.

A WILD OCEAN RIDE.

BY GEORGE H. COOMER.

ONE of the most exciting scenes with a whale which I ever witnessed occurred while I belonged to the ship *Luminary*, upon a cruise in the Arctic Ocean.

The noble game had at that period become very wild. Chased successively from the North Pacific, from the Okhotsk, and from the Sea of Kamtschatka, they had finally taken refuge above Behring Strait; and thither the fleet of eager "blubber-hunters" had followed them, like Nelson in pursuit of the French.

The stately old *Luminary*, with all her royals set, and her trim, handsome boats upon the cranes, had stood gallantly to the northward, braving, with her many expectant consorts, the keen breezes from the Pole. The Arctic was to be our fatalgar, where the fleeing enemy, at last driven to bay, must yield to a general attack.

It should be borne in mind that the right-whale, the species of which we were in pursuit, grows to a much larger size than the sperm. Some which we captured "stowed down" more than two hundred barrels each, and we heard of others of still greater bulk.

They were dangerous old fellows too, although, unlike the sperm-whale, they acted solely on the defensive, and never came at us head on.

After a time there was circulated through the fleet a rumour of a certain great whale that everybody wanted, and nobody could get. Captain Burdick, of the *Canova*, had seen and ventured upon him.

"He kicked liked a mustang," said the captain; "stove two of my boats, and threw me twenty feet high, so that if I hadn't seen where I was going to fall, and *turned myself in the air*, I should have come down among all those harpoons and lances and splinters. There's three hundred and fifty barrels under that old black hide if there's a gallon."

But Captain Burdick would exaggerate—he was proverbial for it—and the men said, "Oh, that's only one of Burdick's yarns." He was blown up once in a steamer loaded with carpenters' tools, and told how he dodged the augers that whizzed about his head.

We soon found, however, that Captain Burdick and the *Canova* were not the only master and ship that had encountered the great whale. Captain Atwell, of the *Atlantic*, had seen him; Captain Soule, of the *South America*, had seen him; Captain Robbins, of the *Tartar*, had seen him; and they all told us that he had more irons in his back than a porcupine had quills.

The boats of the *Dolphin* had "cut from him," because, after a long run to windward, he "sounded," taking out three lengths of line, and coming near carrying all hands to the bottom.

The *Rorqual's* boats had met with worse luck than this, for three of them had been knocked into splinters, and several of their men killed and wounded by the sweep of those terrible "flukes." We found the crew of this ship sober enough as they related their experience.

Such accidents are very common among whalers; but when a number of them are successively caused by the efforts of a single well-known individual, the animal becomes famous throughout the fleet—as if he were a leviathan Bruce, or Tell, or Hereward, gallantly defending the invaded rights of his race.

How many of the big, shy fellows we chased to no purpose! For, as our boats were paddled cautiously upon a school, some one of the wary creatures would turn a small black eye upon us, then put himself leisurely in motion, like a

boat gliding from a pier-head, increasing his speed as he went, and all the others would depart with him, leaving only the vacant water and their long white wakes behind.

The *Canova* and the *Luminary* were much in company, and often we could hear the cheery voice of old Burdick from his quarter-deck.

At length the way of the two ships became much impeded by ice. All about us were floating masses, which in the slant polar sunbeams took on hues of exceeding beauty. Some of these moving islands were very high, and reminded us of immense cathedrals with hundreds of glittering windows; others were low and far-reaching, like treeless plains. But in all the open channels the spouts of great right-whales went up like crystal fountains. We could see them close at hand, and away off on the horizon. A spectacle so inspiring I had never looked upon before, nor have I since.

Back to the mast went the maintopsail of each ship, and down splashed her four boats. Captain Wayne, of the *Luminary*, looked nervously in the direction of his old acquaintance Burdick, and called upon us to give way in earnest.

What a chase it was! around points of the ice, through narrow channels, up temporary lagoons, and anon in the broad, open sea.

The game avoided us. Pull as silently as we would, the great leviathans would still glide away at the very moment we seemed about to close with them.

In one of the ice-formed lagoons, round as the "round table" of the famous knights, and perhaps a mile in diameter, there were at least a dozen of the animals, "blowing," "breaching," and "turning flukes." This place we finally entered for a dash at the school.

But it was like entering a corral of bison, where heels and tails are all in the air at once. One of our boats was stove forthwith, and one of Captain Burdick's. The jovial commander himself got fast, but was obliged to cut from his whale to avoid being taken under the ice.

My own place was with our third mate, a young, athletic man, who, although an excellent whaleman, had of late, through no fault of his own, been so unfortunate that Captain Wayne, in an unreasoning fit of temper, had threatened to "break" him, and send him before the mast. But he had the sympathy and respect of his boat crew, who knew the circumstances.

We all hoped, on Mr. Brewer's account even more than our own, that our boat would this day get a whale.

Bob Rivers, a brawny, powerful fellow, was our boat-steerer. But the boat-steerer has nothing to do with steering until he has struck the whale, when he exchanges places with his superior, and goes from the bow to the stern.

In spite of our hopes, however, it seemed as if we must at last return to the ship without a single laurel from this stirring field. We had only the poor consolation of beholding others as little fortunate as ourselves.

But the moment of triumph was at hand, when all our disappointments were to be well repaid.

We were at the farther side of the lagoon, all the other boats being dispersed here and there, and a whale, which Bob Rivers had thought to strike, was just moving out of our reach, when suddenly, a little off our starboard bow, there rushed to the surface, and shot high above it, a monster much larger than any of the others.

With a loud noise, his great frame fell upon the water, which rolled away from his sides in long wide swells. And then, catching sight of us, he started swiftly off, crossing the head of our boat at a distance which would have seemed hopeless to an ordinary harpooner; yet I felt the quick motion of Bob Rivers as he gathered himself for the dart.

Once, twice, the boat shook from end to end under his feet; and both his good irons were sped. One missed, but the other reached the mark,

"Hurrah!" cried Mr. Brewer; "you're fast! you're fast!—and clear up to the hitch! It was a noble throw, Bob. I was afraid you couldn't hit him."

Bob and the third mate now changed places, the former taking the steering oar, and the latter, lance in hand, planting himself at the bow. The whale started off with astonishing velocity; and, shipping our oars, we turned with our faces to the bow, alert for the least sign of mishap, and ready with knife or hatchet to sever the line at an instant's notice.

My hat went off my head, but I did not know it. The water boiled higher than the boat's sides; and the harpoon line looked like a rod of iron. Old Bob Rivers clung to his steering oar with both hands, seeming, with all his strength, hardly more than a pigmy in that tremendous commotion.

The other boats were passed in a moment. Captain Wayne looked on with inexpressible interest. Captain Burdick stood up and shouted. We could distinguish only a few words:—

"You've got him! you've got him! You'll find half a dozen of my irons in his back. But look out for him—he'll stave you yet."

But he did not stave us. He headed out of the lagoon, and ran for a long distance beyond it. At length he sounded, taking out such a quantity of line that we lost almost all hope of saving him. Then, to our great relief, he began coming up. Up, up, up he came, and we gathered in the slack as he rose.

When he had reached the surface, the boat was hauled quietly to the right position, and Mr. Brewer, standing upon the bow, gave him the lance with a true and powerful stroke.

We then instantly "sterned off," although not until the broad flukes had gone over our heads, fearfully close to us; and the whale at once commenced spouting thick blood—a sign that all was over with him.

The *Luminary* ran down to us, and the huge prize was towed alongside of her. We found in his back a number of harpoons, one of which, sure enough, was Captain Burdick's; and from this circumstance, together with the fact of his

unusual size, there remained no doubt that the animal was the same which had so excited the curiosity of the fleet.

He yielded the very large amount of two hundred and ninety-six barrels.

"Old Burdick," remarked Mr. Brewer—whom this adventure made the lion of the fleet—"wasn't so far out of the way, after all. He came within fifty-four barrellfuls of the truth—didn't he?"

THE STORY OF A GUIDON.

BY LIEUTENANT R. E. PEARY, U.S. NAVY.

I AM a Guidon, a silken flag with a blazing golden star. I am frayed and faded now by furious winds and fierce blinding sunlight, but once I was bright and new, and I have seen sights that eyes never saw before. I have seen the bright stars glitter through the freezing air day and night for weeks, with never a ray of blessed sunlight to dim their lustre, and I have seen the glorious sun roll round the white horizon night and day for months without ever hiding his yellow face. All this and more have I seen in the far North.

I first saw the light one Christmas, in a tiny room lined with warm red blankets, far up in the land of eternal ice and snow. The soft fingers of a fair-faced woman had fashioned me as a Christmas gift for one she loved. I heard her tell him afterwards, with her head on his shoulder, that she had made me from an embroidered silken handkerchief, a present to him when a lover, and the star was a bit of silk from a tea-gown which she had worn as a bride. He gave her an ivory hair-pin which he had carved from the horn of a great narwhal, and this, with a fine dinner, was all the Christmas there was at the little house, for old Santa Claus had gone south several days before to call on the good little boys and girls at home. Then, too, I heard it whispered that Santa was not on very good terms with him, for he had, while out hunting, shot one of the reindeer belonging to Santa's team, and though he was very sorry, and she offered to give Santa her black Newfoundland dog

Jack, who had been trained to pull a sleigh, to take the deer's place, Santa wouldn't have him, and didn't quite forgive the accident.

After she had given me to him he took me and hung me up in the opening between two silken flags which curtained off a bed at one end of the little room, and there I hung for weeks.

The only way that I could tell about the time was by the lamp in the room. This burned during the day and was put out at night, but during all this time no ray of daylight ever came through the windows. Sometimes I saw a star twinkling through the window, and sometimes I got a glimpse of great snow-covered mountains bathed in bright moonlight. At other times the little house trembled with the fury of the storms, and for days at a time I heard the muffled roar of the wind and snow whirling in blinding drifts over the roof. In the little bedroom it was always warm and cosy; but that it was bitter cold outside I knew, because when the Commander and his wife would come in from their snow-shoe tramps their eyebrows and eyelashes would have little icicles on them, and his beard would be such a solid mass of ice that he would have to hold his face in a basin of warm water to thaw it off.

Soon after this I heard a strange chattering in the other room of the house, and then a wild dark face in a fur hood looked through the door; then its owner came in, and two or three others followed. At first I was afraid of these strange creatures with their black eyes, long hair, and clothes of reindeer and fox and shaggy bear-skins, which made them look as broad as they were tall, but I soon got over this when I saw how merry they were, though I could never quite like to have them near me, they were so dirty and smelled so disagreeable. After this they used to come every once in a while, and I heard that some of them had ridden two hundred miles on a sledge drawn by great savage dogs, just to see the Kapitansoak, or great Captain, as they called him, and particularly to see his wife, for they had never

seen a white woman or a woman that wore dresses before. The Commander used to show them a little mirror, and when they saw their faces in it they would shout and laugh and clap their hands just like a baby when it gets a rattle, for they never had seen one before. Then she would give the children candy, and their mothers a bright needle, and they would go away more delighted than you would be with a twenty-dollar gold piece.

The very little children were carried on their mothers' backs in a great warm fur hood, but the larger ones were dressed in furs just like their father and mother. I remember one little boy who had on a fox-skin coat with a hood, a bird-skin shirt, bear-skin trousers and boots, and rabbit-skin stockings. His sister, a year older, had the same kind of coat, but her trousers were shorter and were made of fox-skin, and her boots, of seal skin, were much longer. Her stockings were made of deer-skin.

It must have been at least six weeks after Christmas that I noticed through the window at noon a sort of twilight, and then I heard them telling about the sun coming back. Then one day the Commander put on his fur clothes, took me down, put me in his bosom, and said he was going up on the great ice-cap to see the sun rise.

After this I saw nothing, but I could hear that he, with the Doctor and Astrup, carrying their food and sleeping-bags on their backs, climbed up a great mountain, cutting steps in the snow in some places, then walked far out over the great white ice-cap, and when night came on they built a snow house, and putting their sleeping-bags inside, went to bed to sleep till the next day, when the sun was to come back. But scarcely had they got nicely settled in their house when a furious snow-storm came up, the wind howled in savage fury across the wild frozen desert, and the cutting, drifting snow scoured the top and sides off their snow house, and left them entirely exposed to the wild storm. Their great warm deer-skin bags kept them comfortable, however, and towards morning of the second day the full moon broke

through the clouds and sent them flying away into the frozen interior. Then they got up as best they could in their sleeping-bags, for their clothes were buried deep in the snow, and dug them and their little alcohol stove out. By this time it was nearly noon, when the sun would show its head above the great white mountains in the south, and I was taken from out of the Commander's bosom and fastened to an alpenstock planted in the snow. Never shall I forget the sight as the cold white wind shook me out. Close by me fluttered three other flags; near us was the huge drift which marked the site of the snow house, with the sleeping-bags scattered about it. In every direction stretched the white surface of the ice-cap, which the wind had carved into miniature waves. The southern sky was a conflagration of crimson and rose and purple and green clouds and lights about one dazzling yellow spot where the sun was about to burst upward.

Scarcely had I time to see all this when the wind freshened, and I and my companions flew out into the sparkling air and fluttered and laughed with delight. Then the yellow sunlight fell upon the summit of the highest cliff of Northumberland Island; next Cape Robertson blazed with a crown of glory, and then the yellow sun itself peered over the southern ice-cap, and in an instant the snow waves about us danced, a sea of molten gold. Nor wealth nor fame can purchase from me the supreme memory of that moment when, with my Commander, far above the earth, I laughed with the laughing waves of the great white inland sea in greeting to the long absent sun. For many minutes we watched the glorious god of light roll along the southern ice-cap; then the Commander took me down and put me in his bosom again. Never before had flag or pennant welcomed the returning sun from the surface of the great frozen desert.

After this I hung again for several weeks in the little red room. Once both the Commander and his wife were away for a long time, and when they came back I used to hear them talking of the strange people they had seen, and how they had dashed at a wild gallop over the frozen sea behind

a dozen or twenty great wolfish dogs, and had slept on the snow at night wrapped in their reindeer-skin sleeping-bags. I, however, saw nothing of this.

Then one May day the Commander took me down, and there were tears in his wife's eyes as he put me in his bosom again, for this time he was going away alone, to be gone for months on the long white journey to the north which they had talked so much about.

It must have been several days after this that he took me out and pressed me to his lips, then fastened me to a bamboo staff and planted me in the snow. I found myself once more on the great ice-cap. Now, however, no distant mountain-tops could be seen, only the unbroken white horizon in every direction. The sun shone brightly, and near me were sixteen great dogs fastened to stakes driven in the snow, and four sledges, and three men besides the Commander all dressed in furs. I at once saw that it was a camp, and that preparations were being made for the evening meal. When this was cooked and eaten each of the men fastened his clothes tightly about him, and lay down behind his sledge to sleep. The Commander lay down beneath me, and all the time while they slept I waved and rustled in the wind and watched the weather, to warn them by a louder whisper of coming storms.

From that time on for nearly a hundred days I never slept, and the great sun whirled ceaselessly around the heavens, never once hiding his face below the horizon. After sleeping several hours, the Commander awoke, and called one of the others, who got up and made some tea, which they all drank with some crackers and pemmican. Then the sleeping-bags were rolled up and placed on the sledges, the sledges firmly lashed, and the dogs attached to them. Then the Commander fastened on his snow-shoes, took me in hand, and strode off to the north, calling to the dogs of his team. With a joyous yelp, Miss Tawanah leaped into the air in the effort to follow him, Nalegaksoak, Pau, and Panickpa followed, straining in their traces, the sledge moved, the others started, and soon we were merrily under way.

After five or six hours they stopped for lunch, and then five or six hours later, after travelling twenty miles or more, the Commander stopped, and stood me in the snow again. This, as I afterwards learned, was the signal that the day's work was ended. As soon as the sledges came up, the dogs were taken from them, and fastened to stakes driven in the snow a little to one side. While one of the men began cooking dinner on the alcohol stove, the Commander took some pemmican from the sledge, and cutting it into lumps, fed the dogs. What a racket they made as they fought and tugged at their lines in their efforts to get to him first! In a few minutes they had bolted their dinner, and lay down in the snow to sleep. Then the four fur-clad figures ate their dinners and drank their hot tea, and then they too lay down in the snow behind the sledges, and soon were fast asleep—all except the Commander. He took a strange-looking instrument out of a box, set it in the snow, then looked through it at the sun, then wrote in a little book, and did this for more than an hour. But at last he too went to sleep, and left me alone fluttering over the sleeping camp, and making friends with the great yellow sun that matched my yellow star so beautifully.

So day after day we journeyed northward over the white desert, he and I always in advance, travelling straight as the flight of an arrow, and the dogs' sledges following in our tracks. At first I was afraid of the dogs, and feared that if I should fall down or the wind blow me over some time, some of them would eat me. They were such great savage brutes, with such long white teeth, and they fought with one another like wolves. But they all "loved" the Commander, because he always fed them himself, and fixed their harnesses if they did not fit, and I used to like to see them crowd around him and rub against his legs when he came in the morning to untie them. Then he would pat their heads and rub their chins till they would jump up on him, with low growls of dog satisfaction, until I could hardly believe that these same dogs had fought and killed many a fierce white bear—"the tiger of the north."

After a time I got to know them all—Nalegaksoak, the

King, Pau, Nalegak Martloo, or Lion, as he called him, Miss Tawanah, Panickpa, Merktoshar, Arngodoblaho, and the rest ; but I liked the Commander's team best—partly because I knew they were the biggest and nicest, and partly because they knew me. There was big Nalegaksoak, the King, and Pau his black brother, Miss Tawanah, a dog with one eye (but that eye was always on the lookout for him), and the two Panickpas. They soon got acquainted with me, and learned to know me. When the Commander took me in his hand and started off, they tugged at their traces until the sledge started ; then they trotted merrily along at his heels. Sometimes towards night they would get a little tired, and lag behind ; but when he stood me in the snow, and turning round, would call, "Come on, boys ; huk, huk, huk, nannook, nannook," how they would yelp and growl, and come galloping up until they could lick his hands, and then lie down about me ! Nalegaksoak and Pau used to jump up at me, and try to play with me as I fluttered in the wind ; and after a time I learned a little of their language, and used to hear them talking about their bear-fights, and wondering where he was taking them to.

After we had been marching many days, we stopped longer than usual one night, and when we started again, there was only the Commander and one companion, the other two going back, I heard him say, to the little house.

After that we kept on day after day, always northward.

Sometimes I could see just the tops of great mountains miles and miles away, and sometimes there were great blue chasms in the ice, which we had to go around.

There were great storms, when for two or three days neither the Commander nor his companion could get out of their burrow in the snow, and when the furious wind and the rushing white river of snow below me used to make me dizzy.

At last we came to a strange northern land, and if I should tell you all the wonderful things I saw there, it would take a book. How the Commander shot the great musk-oxen, and

how the brave dogs feasted on their meat till they could eat no more ; how we saw birds and flowers and butterflies ; and how at last we came out on a great precipice far up the east coast of Greenland ; and how he put me up on a pile of stones and let me look out upon the great frozen Arctic Ocean, which no eyes had ever seen before ; then how we returned over the frozen desert ; and finally he gave me back into the fair hands that had made me, and here I am.

A BATTLE ROYAL.

BY C. D. HOWARD.

PADDLING up a long, glassy lake deep in among the ranges of northern Maine one clear afternoon in October, Roberts and I made our way toward a lumber-camp at the upper end of the lake. We were hunting, and had started from our camp at the lower end soon after dinner, intending to spend the night at the lumber-camp and make an early start next morning into the forest to the north of the lake. Jim, the guide who accompanied us, said that deer were "thicker'n sparrers" in that direction. We had killed a buck that morning—Roberts and I, without the guide—and had hung him up on a tree not far from the lake, intending to call for him on our way up.

We had with us a queer little nondescript dog named Jock, who was useful for scaring up rabbits and treeing squirrels for supper. As a rule we left him to guard the camp when we went off for a day's hunt, as his voice, quite out of proportion to his bulk, was enough to scare all the deer for a mile around. As we expected to be gone two days at least, we brought the dog this time, with the purpose of leaving him at the lumber-camp.

As we were passing a little thickly wooded promontory, connected with the shore by a narrow neck of land, we heard, somewhere among the tree-tops, the grunting of a porcupine or hedgehog. I had never seen one of these curious creatures, and was anxious to secure one. So I suggested that we go ashore and let Jock hunt him up.

Roberts was inclined to laugh at this proposition, but Jim,

the guide, remarked, "Look a-here ; where was it you fellows left that buck you killed this morning?"

We looked about, seeking to locate the spot. When we described the ground, Jim declared that we had already passed it by a mile.

"Well, 'said Roberts rather sheepishly to me, "you and Jock may go and get your hedgehog, and Jim and I will go back after the buck."

So I jumped ashore with the little dog, who was always ready for any fun. The hedgehog kept on talking at a lively rate, unsuspecting of our designs against his peace and welfare. As the canoe was leaving, Jim called out, "That 'ere dog's jest blame fool enough to grab that critter when he comes down. If you let him touch the hedgehog you'll have some doctorin' to do."

The inexperienced Jock charged into the bushes, and soon located the noisy animal, a fact which he announced by vigorous barking. I found the dog dancing on his hind legs at the foot of a tall hemlock ; and in a moment I could see a black bunch far up aloft, which was scolding away at us savagely.

I fired at it with my Winchester. There was a ripping and scratching up aloft, and as I dodged from under, down came the hedgehog with a thump.

Before I could prevent it, Jock had grabbed the creature as if he would shake its very teeth out. But the next minute he was tearing away in erratic circles, yelling and clawing at his mouth and nose, which were full of quills. I was somewhat alarmed, for I knew that not only do the quills of the hedgehog cling to the flesh, but they are poisonous to a certain degree.

I picked up the dead porcupine and swung it over the branch of a tree, to prevent further accidents. It was about as big as a young Newfoundland puppy, and resembled a tiny bear, with long, black fur, mingled with white quills. I got a quill in my thumb, which made me howl for a moment, until I had extracted it. Meantime, poor Jock was writhing

somewhere in the bushes, and when I went to his assistance he was still clawing and yelping.

I caught him and sat down to cut the quills with my knife. They were actually bristling in the dog's mouth and nose. It was a long and very painful series of operations under my unskilful hands, but Jock lay quietly, merely whimpering as I worked.

When I had removed the last quill, I took the poor dog down to the water to bathe the sores, and was endeavouring to overcome his ordinary aversion to water for cleansing purposes when, far back in the forest, I heard the baying of a hound, a faint "Ough! ough! ough!" Jock jumped up and stood at attention.

Again it sounded, the clear, bell-like tones apparently nearer this time. Then another dog's voice joined in, and I knew that hounds were on the track of a deer which, I had no doubt, would take water near where I stood, as the baying still grew louder.

The law in Maine forbids hounding deer at any time, but the statute is disregarded in the wilder parts of the state. The game wardens have a strong disinclination to interfere, owing to the rough handling many of them have received at the hands of certain hunters who consider it their natural right to kill deer when and how they please, in spite of the restraining laws.

Either these dogs had come from the lumber-camp and were on the trail by accident, or else had been "put in" by some hunter who was now lying in wait on the lake. Deer invariably make for the nearest body of water when driven, feeling sure of escape by swimming.

As the baying came nearer, Jock started to reply with an excited yelp. I throttled him into silence, picked up my rifle, and felt for my cartridges. I always try to respect game laws, but it would take more self-restraint than I possess to resist trying at least one shot at a deer in the season, when driven in by some one else's dogs.

However, fortunately for my principles, I discovered that

my cartridge-belt was in the canoe and my rifle magazine was empty. The shot at the hedgehog had used the only one in it when I landed.

Bound at least to see the fun, I picked up the struggling Jock by the back of the neck, preventing his making a sound beyond a gurgle of remonstrance, and hid myself with him among some jagged rocks on the little promontory, where I had a good view of the lake.

Before long a crashing of bushes was added to the dogs' baying, and then I heard the *thumpety-thump* of hoofs on the little strip of land between us and the shore. I had Jock's head under my reefer, and he was wildly kicking, scratching off buttons in his frantic efforts to get free.

The next instant there was another crackling of bushes, and then a great buck, with superb antlers, shot by with a long, graceful leap, but stopped short when he reached the beach, with a grand splutter of gravel.

For a second he stood there, with tongue lolling out—pretty well winded, I thought. Then, as the savage baying rang out close behind, he dashed into the water just as the two hounds crashed through the bushes side by side.

To my amazement, the buck, when breast-deep in the lake, turned sharply about and faced the dogs with lowered antlers. I think he was exhausted by his long run, and preferred to take the chances of a fight for his life, knowing that he had his enemies at a disadvantage in the water.

One of the dogs looked like a big foxhound, the other was a shaggy, yellow chap, about as big as a collie, whose voice was a deep roar, with nothing in it of the bell-like note which characterises the hound.

For half a minute the three stood there—the buck shaking his head and grunting defiance, and the dogs fiercely snarling.

I never witnessed a finer spectacle. The sun was setting and the lake was like a great mirror, reflecting the surrounding hills with all their glorious autumn colours; and in sharp contrast to the peaceful landscape stood the great buck, bravely facing his enemies.

In another moment the big yellow dog dashed into the water straight at the buck. The other dog apparently decided to "umpire" the affair, remaining ashore and watching the progress of the contest.

The yellow dog's attack was met by a shove from the lowered antlers, which sent him under water. Up he came again with a sneeze, and, nothing daunted, tried a flank movement; but every approach was met by another push from the great horns. The buck had a strong advantage, for he stood on the bottom, while the dog was out of his depth.

Tired of his useless attempts, the dog at last turned in shore until he was within his depth, and then stood silently facing his antagonist, watching for a chance to jump.

His opportunity came in a moment. Temporarily freed from his assailant, the buck raised his head and gave a snort to clear his nostrils of water. Quick as a flash the dog made a mighty leap at the exposed throat, sending a shower of spray in all directions. Down came the head, but too late; the dog had seized the buck right by the nose.

Then began a gallant fight. The buck reared wildly, swinging the great dog nearly clear of the water, and striking at him with his forefeet; but in spite of the fact that every blow of the sharp hoofs inflicted a cut, the dog held on with a silent stubbornness that showed bulldog blood somewhere.

Down they came again with a mighty splash, the buck dragged to his knees by the dog's weight; and the dog was compelled by this either to let go or be drowned. The dog loosed his grip, but before the buck could rise had seized him again by the side of his neck. This time his hold was not so good, however; the buck gave a quick jerk of his head, and the dog fell smack on his back. Then in a second the great antlers were pressing him down under water.

By this time my sympathies were entirely on the buck's side, and I think that if the other hound had come to his companion's rescue, I should have taken a hand myself, at the risk of being attacked by both.

For a few moments there was a frantic struggle. Then the

dog cleared himself from the entangling horns and came up gasping. Up reared the buck, and down came his hoofs with terrible force on the dog's back, driving him under a second time.

Again and again the gallant deer reared and came down, striking with both forefeet alternately, never allowing the dog to get in shore, and stamping on the half-drowned brute with indescribable fury. The water was crimson now, the blood of both dog and buck mingling.

In my excitement at the present turn of affairs, I forgot the wildly indignant Jock, who suddenly freed himself and flew toward the scene of battle, yelping in mad excitement. The buck stopped dancing on his vanquished enemy, and turned toward Jock with a startled snort.

At this moment I caught sight of our canoe about seventy-five yards down the lake, in a line with the deer and myself. Roberts stood in it with rifle in hand, while Jim paddled vigorously. Seeing that if Roberts fired and missed the deer he would probably hit me, I jumped up, waving my rifle and shouting.

At sight of me the deer turned and started out into the lake, leaving his nearly dead antagonist feebly struggling toward the shore. At the same moment a sort of war-whoop came from Roberts, expressing both bewilderment and exasperation at my extraordinary conduct in neither shooting the deer myself nor getting out of the way so that he might shoot.

Catching sight of the canoe and rendered desperate, the buck swung around again and made a gallant dash ashore for freedom. The foxhound, which all the time had been leaping about, encouraging his more warlike comrade at the top of his lungs, sprang at the buck's throat as he passed, but missed his hold and fell back on the beach. Recovering himself, he started after the panting buck, which had passed quite close to me.

Thoroughly anxious for the deer to escape, I jumped and struck at the dog with the butt of my rifle, inflicting a blow which knocked him over, stunned, while the deer went

bounding away toward the mainland, with little Jock scampering after him.

As he crossed the neck of land the crack of a rifle came up from the lake. Then I saw another canoe with a single occupant about fifty yards away, with a little white puff of smoke rising beside it.

The shot missed the running buck, and I heard the animal go leaping away through the forest on the mainland. Jock soon gave it up and came back as I was helping the wounded dog ashore.

The yellow fighter was cut and gashed from head to tail. One eye was closed and one fore-leg either broken or badly sprained. He was, beside, nearly drowned. I feared the poor chap was done for; and notwithstanding my sympathy for the buck, I could not help pitying the dog, for he had shown a splendid sort of courage by the way he attacked his enemy in his vantage-ground in the water.

The two canoes grated on the beach together, and the stranger, a bronzed, strapping fellow, got out and knelt over the dog.

"Well, old fellow," said he, as he examined the wounds, "you got the worst of it, didn't you? Thar's jest a drop too much bull in you, tacklin' a big buck like that in the water, and fightin' till he clean knocked you out!"

The man said that he had put the dogs in about two miles above and had seen the buck come in, when he had paddled to the scene, but had not dared to fire on account of the deer and dogs being "so everlastin'ly tangled."

He belonged to the lumber-camp, and was an old friend of Jim's.

We all paddled up to the camp together, not forgetting the hedgehog; but it took forcible persuasion to get Jock into the same canoe with the creature.

Jim paddled his friend's canoe while he dressed his dog's wounds, the other dog watching the operation with great interest, and appearing quite elated over his own sagacity in keeping out of the scrimmage.

"I calc'late the dog'll pull through," said the lumberman sententiously. "He's a good sight better pup than he looks."

This seemed quite possible.

I may add that on our arrival we were met by ten or fifteen dogs of all degrees, who, as if scandalised at the warrior's outrageous appearance, and probably glad of a chance to get the champion fighter at a disadvantage, started in a body to attack him, valiantly opposed by the foxhound, gallant little Jock, Jim and the big lumberman. Roberts and I retired out of range while the sticks and stones were flying. There was a terrible tangle, but the yellow dog was rescued. Poor Jock was left in still worse shape than the hedgehog had left him.

LANDING A RIVER-HORSE.

BY WILLIAM O. STODDARD.

‘**W**HAT were we there for?’ said Uncle Marbury.
“Why, we wanted to kill a hippopotamus.”

“Was Mr. Lloyd a great hunter too?” asked Cal.

“Yes; he’d hunted all sorts of wild animals, and so had I. We could each say we’d killed lions and tigers and elephants, but we had never before gone after any hippopotami.”

“Hippopotamuses? Were there any there?”

“That’s where they belong. But don’t say ‘muses.’ One is a hippopotamus. I killed five while I was there, and as soon as I had two of them, they were hippopotami.”

“My!” exclaimed Robert, “I never heard that before.”

Cal had his school atlas out on the table, and his finger was already pushing along up the west coast of Africa.

“There’s Angola.”

“Now find the river Coanza. There’s any number of them, and they’re all alike. Where are my spectacles?”

“I’ve got it,” said Cal. “Was that where you found ’em?”

“They live along all those rivers. The banks are all woods and swamps and mud, and the rivers are just about fit for river-horses to wallow in.”

“River-horses!” exclaimed Rob, who was staring at a cut of one in his Natural History. “He’s no more like a horse than this house is.”

“Well, no,” said Uncle Marbury; “there isn’t much horse about them, but they spend most of their time in the river, so half their name is correct. The first one I killed tipped over all our boats, so we had to swim for it.”

"Did he get a bite at any of you?"

"It wasn't his fault that he didn't. We found out that fishing for river-horses was a serious piece of business."

"Fish for them? What! with a hook and line?"

"Not exactly. It was a good deal more like fishing for whales. Mr. Lloyd and I went after them with a lot of black hunters. We took our guns, and they took their harpoons, and such a time as we had you never saw."

Cal and Rob were getting a good deal waked up on the river-horse question, and their mother dropped her book in her lap, although she had heard that story once or twice before.

"Now, boys," she said, "don't interrupt your uncle. Let him tell it all his own way."

Cal and Rob looked at each other. Cal had at least three questions in his mouth, and Rob had two, all ready to ask, but they shut their lips hard, and Rob took a tight grip of his chair, so he shouldn't let go of those questions.

Uncle Marbury leaned back in his Sleepy Hollow chair, and went right on:

"The black men go for them in boats, with harpoons that they make themselves. They take a stout pole, of a hard, heavy wood that grows there, and cut it to about ten or twelve feet long and three or four inches thick. That's the shaft of the harpoon. The head is made of a tough piece of iron, thicker than my finger, and about a foot long. It has a barbed spear-head at the end, and when those barbs get under the tough hide of a hippopotamus, all the plunging and struggling he can do won't make them pull out.

"They bore a hole in the end of the pole just big enough to take in a few inches of the iron foot of the barbed head, and it fits loosely, so it'll come out. That's just what they want it to do. I'll tell you why. Just as soon as a hippopotamus is wounded, he turns to bite at the thing that hurt him, and if his great jaws and sharp teeth shut down on a piece of wood, they'd grind it to splinters, no matter how hard and strong it might be. If it was a rope, they'd cut

it right off, and the hunters would lose their harpoon and their game too. So they leave the iron head loose, to come out, and fasten it to the pole by a sort of long band that is made of ever so many tough strong cords, not very large, any one of them, and these slip around among the teeth, and if some of them do get cut off, there are always 'enough left to hold by.

"The other end of the pole has a long rope, like a whale line, tied to it, and that is coiled up in the boat, and they let it run out or pull it in, just as they see fit.

"We had two of those harpoons in each of our boats, and all of the black men had spears, and Lloyd and I had double-barrelled rifles, and our first river-horse was almost too much for us in spite of them all."

"Did he fight hard?"

"Calvin!" said his mother.

"I'll tell you. Lloyd and I had a good yawl boat we had brought with us, and half a dozen black men to paddle, and there were two canoes, each with three black men in it, but we didn't bring any canoes home. Mr. Lloyd and I and my black servant were the only men in those boats that had any clothes on to speak of.

"Now, you see, boys, the hippopotami are a good deal like you—they have favourite spots along the river where they go in swimming, and sometimes a good many will go in together, and have a good bath of mud and water. The black hunters find out these places, but it wouldn't do to go straight for them. You'd only scare them away if you did that.

"Mr. Lloyd and I let the black hunters do things their own way; and they had made our camp, the night before, two good miles above one of these wallowing-places. So, when we started, we let the boat and the two canoes float down with the current, just steering them a little, and you never saw so many men keep so still. It was dreadfully warm, and we'd have envied the black men if it hadn't been for the mosquitoes. They didn't seem to mind them, but we were

glad enough there were some spots on 'us where the ugly little scamps couldn't bite to do any harm. I believe, though, that my black servant would have stripped off his clothes if he hadn't been so proud of them. Suddenly one of the black hunters in my boat put his hand on my arm, and pointed at something a little ahead of the canoe on the left.

"It was something big and black coming slowly up through the water. A little pair of ears very wide apart; then the great eyes that seemed to stick right out; then the nose—there was no use in asking whose head that was. Just enough of his body followed above the surface to give the black hunter in the prow of that canoe a fair mark for his harpoon. He was close up when he threw it; and he drove it in good and deep, now I tell you. I felt sure it would stick, but it must have astonished that river-horse. He gave a tremendous angry sort of grunt and a great jump, and the head of the harpoon came out of the socket, just as it was meant to, and off he started down stream. He pulled that canoe along fast enough, and the rest of us paddled for dear life.

"I tried hard to get a shot at him, and so did Lloyd, whenever any of him showed above water, but our bullets must have glanced from his hard, wet hide, if any of them hit him, and I'm not half sure they did.

"You've no idea at what a rate he managed to travel. It was hot work to keep anywhere near him. We wanted him to go ashore or into shallow water, where we could get at him. They're a good deal more dangerous in the water than they are out of it.

"He was more scared than hurt, though, and he didn't care a copper what we wanted; but in one of his turns he gave me a chance to put a rifle-bullet into his side."

"Did it kill him?" Both boys had spoken at once.

"No, it didn't kill him, but it made him angry, and just then one of the black hunters drove a spear into him.

"Then the fight began. He was furious with pain, and didn't seem to care any more for spears and bullets after that than I did for the mosquitoes. He dived and rose, and

lived and rose, and tried every way to get at us, and the black men had to ply their paddles more than their spears.

‘He snorted and squealed with rage, and made the water fairly foam for a few minutes, and then he tried a piece of cunning. He swam around under water for nearly a minute, and the harpoon rope was out so loose and long that we couldn’t keep very close track of him.

“Suddenly the black hunters in one of the canoes gave a frightened yell, and sprang out. I saw a great gaping pair of jaws shutting down over the side of that canoe, and they crunched it in pieces as easily as you would bite through a brittle ginger-snap. He had spoiled the canoe at one bite, and then he dashed fiercely around in all directions, looking for the men. They swam well, but he’d have caught some of them if it hadn’t been that the harpoon in him belonged to the other canoe, and the crew of that were hauling on it with all their might. The upset men scrambled into my boat, and Lloyd and I got some shots at the hippopotamus that weakened him. It was well we did, for they pulled too hard on the harpoon rope, and got too near, and in a moment more they too were in the river, and their canoe was being bitten to splinters. It was hard and dangerous work to save those men, but we did it, and our yawl was terribly crowded when they were all in. It began to look like a doubtful fight, for we had lost hold of the harpoon rope ; but the hippopotamus had managed to bring us all nearer the bank, where the water was not so deep, and he had no notion of running now. He stood at bay a minute or so later, half out of water, and the black hunters sprang out, and went at him with their spears like heroes. I never saw such daring fellows ; but Mr. Lloyd and I were doing all we could with our rifles, and the river-horse hardly knew which way to turn. Something was hitting him from every direction. I was just beginning to wonder if he could be killed at all, when he made a sudden turn and a rush, and over went our boat, and we too were sprawling in the river. I must say I felt a little queer when I went under ; but when I got my head out again, there was

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the hippopotamus within ten feet of me, his mouth wide open for a bite, but staggering and falling over on his side.

"He went right to the bottom, but we didn't lose him. Some of the black men righted our boat, and some dived and searched for the guns and things, and found them, and some of them worked away at the hippopotamus till they got a strong rope hitched around his lower jaw. Then we all tugged and pulled till we had him half out of water, at the shore of the river. He was an enormous fellow, and more like a big black hog than like any horse I ever saw."

"Did the natives carry him home?" asked Cal.

"Well, yes, a good part of him. But they cooked and ate him first. They built a big fire on the bank, and kept on cutting off slices and roasting and broiling till I wondered when they'd stop."

“MAN OVERBOARD!”

BY W. THOMSON.

IT is a startling thing to hear this cry in mid-ocean—to see a companion vanish suddenly from one's side, to appear again only as a mere speck on the bosom of the great deep, tossed about like a plaything by the hungry waves, and struggling for his life. Several times this experience has been mine, and the horror of it has not been assuaged by repetition.

Vividly, as if the event were of yesterday, I recall the first accident of this kind I witnessed. It occurred in 1852, on my voyage to Australia in the sailing ship *Revenue*, which left New York July 3rd, with some one hundred and eighty passengers, bound for the new land of gold.

One day, while the vessel was running free at the rate of eight or nine knots an hour, with a lively breeze on the star-board quarter, a young man named J.—, in attempting to bathe himself on the taffrail, fell backwards into the sea.

“A man overboard!” “A man overboard!” came the cry instantly, and all was commotion.

“Hard up with the helm! Let go the main-sheet! Let go all!” shouted the captain; and the vessel came slowly round into the wind. Meantime life-preservers and buoys were thrown out by the passengers, but L—was already far to the stern, and although manfully swimming, did not see or could not reach the buoys.

Again Captain Crowell's orders rang out: “Break out, break away and man the yawl! Quick, men, quick for your lives!”

The first mate and his crew sprang to obey ; but "quick" they could not be, for a few days previously we had passed through a fearful storm off the Cape of Good Hope, and the boats had all been taken off the davits and firmly lashed amidship.

It was fully twenty minutes before the yawl was launched and manned, with the first mate in command. The ship had been brought with her head to the wind, and the solitary swimmer was now off the starboard bow, and was quite half a mile distant.

Though there was not much sea on, the light waves were several feet high, and it was only when our comrade rose on the crest of one of these that we could see him. He had ceased swimming even before the boat left the ship, but was still floating ; and, very strangely, apparently face downward, with legs and arms entirely submerged.

He appeared to have lost consciousness, for he rose and fell like a log. We had, nevertheless, great hopes that he still lived, since every time he passed over the summit of a wave his face was clear of the water for a moment.

When the rescuing crew were at last ready to start, it was found that, owing to their low level, they could not see the young man at all. So the captain climbed into the rigging and directed their course by signals.

It would be quite impossible to describe the emotion and anxiety of the passengers during all this time, which seemed an age to us. Among our whole number, I am sure there was not one who more earnestly prayed for the rescue of this young, whole-souled fellow than did I. There was an especial reason why I should desire his rescue.

Although one of the most kind-hearted of human beings, and generous to a fault, L—— had, like most high-spirited young men, a very quick temper ; and a few minutes before he fell overboard, he and I had been engaged in a rather warm discussion on some trivial matter. He became quite angry over it, and, in the heat of argument, applied to me a very unjust epithet, of which I took no notice.

I could not now bear to think that he should die with this unkind feeling rankling in his mind, or that I should not have the opportunity of showing him that I felt no resentment.

The anxious passengers, crowded upon bulwarks and rigging, could see that the inert body still floated. Moreover, we could tell from the now straight course and quickened stroke of the crew that the body was at last seen by the steersman.

Would they reach it in time? Scores of men quite unconsciously shouted: "Oh! pull, boys, pull! Pull just this once as you never pulled before."

And pull, indeed, the brave fellows did. The tough oars bent and strained under their mighty strokes, and the boat cut through the crests of opposing waves.

The suspense is awful. We cannot bear it in silence. Like men bereft of reason, one and another, in uncontrollable excitement, shout to the boat's crew, far out of hearing:—"One more stroke, boys! Push her through!"

But hush! The mate drops his oar and stands up in the bow. He leans far over, stoops to the water's edge, grasps an inanimate form and lifts it tenderly into the boat.

Then, indeed, our pent-up feelings found vent. Some wept, shouted, sang and even danced in their exuberant joy, shook hands with and embraced every one within reach and otherwise disported themselves like crazy creatures. But these trifling demonstrations were quickly swallowed up in a wild volume of ringing cheers, led by the captain himself.

The rescuing boat approached, and in ominous silence the crew passed up the body into waiting hands. The ship's physician hastily examined it, turned to the anxious crowd, and said: "Steady now, men. No noise; our friend still lives."

It was wonderfully welcome assurance, but no word was spoken.

L— was quickly placed in his berth, with bottles of hot water at his hands and feet, and covered with well-warmed blankets, while the doctor did all else in his power to restore suspended animation.

In the course of half an hour, to the infinite relief of all on board, these efforts were crowned with success. I was sitting by his bedside when L—— regained consciousness, and was greatly surprised and affected by his first words: "Where is Thomson? I want to see him."

I understood at once his train of half-awakened thought, and in a cheerful tone replied: "I am here, old fellow; right by your side."

Then, in his low, weak voice, he said: "Thomson, I'm sorry. Are we friends?"

This was almost too much for my composure, but I managed to answer: "My dear boy, all is peace between us, now and always; and I earnestly thank God for your recovery."

He faintly pressed my hand, and with a smile of deep content, dropped off to sleep quietly as an infant. The next day he was on deck again, bright and cheerful as ever, but with an under-lying vein of seriousness which well became him.

Almost thirty-eight years have passed since that time, but L—— and I are still fast friends. He passed unharmed through the perils and vicissitudes of a life on the "diggings" for several years. Then he returned to his home in Canada, studied law, and was finally appointed judge of his county, which honourable position he still holds.

BLOCKADED BY A LION.

BY DAVID KER.

"NOW, monsieur," says old Major De Launay, pointing to the vast jungle of monstrous reeds fringing the African coast far as the eye can reach, as the Tunis steamer heads seaward out of Bona Harbour, "if you want some sport, take a gun and go in among those reeds, and you may be sure of not having long to wait before you find yourself face to face with a lion."

"A lion?" echo I. "Why, I thought they had all been killed off long ago."

"So they have everywhere else along the coast; but just here, as you see, it's a wild kind of country, and Monsieur Yellowmane has it all his own way. There are plenty of brave fellows among our Arabs here, and we Frenchmen don't consider ourselves cowards; but I can tell you that you won't find a man in all this district, Arab or Frenchman, who would go through those reeds after night-fall—no, not if you were to offer him a thousand francs."

"Wouldn't you do it yourself, then, M. De Launay?" ask I, rather surprised at such an avowal from a man whose reckless courage is a proverb throughout the length and breadth of Algeria.

"No, that I wouldn't," answers the old soldier, emphatically. "I've tried it once already, and I can promise you I won't easily forget how *that* adventure ended. Would you like to hear the story? Well, then, here it is for you:

Some thirty years ago, when I was a good deal nimbler

than I am now (and a good deal sillier too, I'm afraid), a lot of us were quartered at Bona, with nothing much to do except taking charge of some stores; and as always happens with young officers when there's not enough duty on hand to keep them steady, we weren't long in getting into mischief. One day at mess somebody brought up this story of the reed jungle, and how no one dared go into it, and we all began joking each other about who should be the man to face the lions.

"De Launay's the one to do it!" cried Alphonse St. Foix, a young sub lieutenant. "He's afraid of nothing. Don't you remember how he led the assault at Constantine?"

"It would hardly be a fair trial though," said our senior major, in his polite way; "for the lions would undoubtedly let him pass as one of themselves."

"Or if he were to put on a lion's hide," chimed in Claude Latour (who must have his joke, whatever happened), "they'd never find him out so long as he didn't bray."

At that there was a general laugh, which put me out so much that (more shame for me) I fairly lost my temper.

"Well," cried I, springing up, "for that one word I'll go and do the thing this very night, and *then* it shall be seen which of us is the lion, and which the ass."

"Agreed! agreed!" shouted all, clapping their hands, and hallooing like madmen.

But poor Claude looked quite chop-fallen, for he had never intended to push the joke so far, and the moment we rose from table he came up to me and held out his hand.

"For Heaven's sake, Henri," said he, "don't go and get yourself killed just for that foolish joke of mine, which I ought to have bitten my tongue off sooner than utter. I never dreamed you'd take it so seriously, and I'm heartily sorry to have vexed you."

I answered not a word, but just looked him straight in the eyes for a moment, and then turned my back and walked off. Many a time have I been sorry for it since then, for

the poor fellow was killed by those rascally Kabyles (Arabs) a few months later; but one always repents of these things too late.

Well, night came at last, and every officer who wasn't on duty turned out to see me start. It had been arranged that I was to set off a little after midnight, and that my comrades were to see me into the jungle at a point close to the sea, and then come to meet me about sunrise at another point farther inland. The whole length of my circuit through the reeds would be only a little over two miles, but this, in a tract where one step was generally supposed to be certain death, was thought quite sufficient.

I took my double-barrelled rifle and hunting knife (not that *they* could be much good against a whole jungle of lions), and the moment our watches pointed to half-past twelve, off we started. I couldn't help thinking as we went along that there could hardly have been a worse night for the purpose, so far as *I* was concerned. The night was so still that you might have heard a step hundreds of yards away, and the full moon gave light enough to make out the smallest print of a newspaper, let alone the figure of a man. But, 'as we say, "when you've broken the shell, you must eat the egg"; so I kept my thoughts to myself, and tramped on.

It was a pretty long march, and a difficult one too, down to the place for which we were bound. By the time we got there it was two o'clock, leaving less than two hours before sunrise. At last the great reed forest began to rise before us, shadowy and spectral in the moonlight. My comrades shook me by the hand, and wished me good-speed. In another moment the reeds had closed behind me.

Just at first I didn't feel it so much, for the excitement of the adventure kept me up; and, besides, I had quite enough to do in picking my way along, the reeds being a good deal higher than my head, and very nearly as thick as a man's wrist. But when the first excitement began to wear off, *then* it all came upon me at once, just like the shock of a shower-bath. Every time a reed rustled I seemed

to feel the sharp teeth in my flesh already ; and indeed it's a wonder how I ever escaped, for I could hear them moving on every side of me ; but somehow or other none of them offered to touch me.

On I went—on, on, on—until I seemed to have done ten miles instead of two. In fact, I afterward found that I had gone far beyond the prescribed distance ; but what could I do, with the reed-tops shutting out the very sky, until sometimes I had hardly any moon to steer by ? At last the reeds began to grow thinner, and presently, just as I was getting fairly tired out, forth I came on to the open plain, with the first gleam of daybreak just dawning in the eastern sky.

Then I discovered, to my very great disgust, that instead of striking the point where my comrades were to meet me, I had gone ever so far beyond it.

“Well,” thought I, “there’s time enough yet, at all events before sunrise. I’ll just sit down and rest for five minutes and then walk back to the meeting-place.”

So down I sat upon a rock, and, as you might expect, was fast asleep directly.

I don’t know how long I slept ; but I awoke suddenly with that uneasy feeling which you sometimes have when somebody stands by your bedside, and looks fixedly down upon you as you sleep. And sure enough somebody *was* looking fixedly down upon me ; for when my eyes opened they rested upon the biggest lion I’d ever seen in my life.

I took in the full horror of the situation at a glance. My gun had slid down over the smooth rock, and was lying full six feet away, with the beast right between me and it. My comrades, even if they hadn’t got tired of waiting and gone home (as they most likely had), were too far off to be summoned by any shout. Add to this that I was already parched with thirst, and that the sun was mounting, and making the rock on which I lay hotter and hotter every moment, and you have some idea of the nice predicament that I was in.

It’s an awkward confession for an old soldier to make, but I must admit that I fairly lost my head. All hope of escapin

went out of my mind at once; my only thought was to throw myself upon the lion, and get it over as soon as possible. But as I put my hand behind me to raise myself up, it struck against a big stone.

In a moment, as if some one had spoken it in my ear, I got the idea of a device that might save me yet. I clutched the stone, and keeping it well behind my back (for I knew that any sudden movement would bring the lion upon me at once), jerked it from me so as to let it fall among the reeds. At the crash that it made, the lion turned like lightning, and gave a spring in that direction, and I gave another, right across the rock to where my gun was lying. I had barely seized it, when the beast turned upon me.

After that it was all like a confused dream. The rush of the huge, tawny body, the glare of the yellow eyes into mine, and the hot, foul breath steaming on my face, the flash and crack of my piece, the lion's hoarse, bubbling growl, and the report of my second barrel, seemed all to come together. I remember nothing distinctly until I found myself leaning upon my rifle, sick and dizzy, as if I'd fallen out of a window, with the lion dead at my feet.

Just then my comrades, startled by the shots, came running up. I was glad *then* that they hadn't seen me in my difficulty, although I wouldn't have thought it an intrusion, a few minutes before, if the whole French army had come up in a body. They praised me up to the skies, and insisted on carrying off the skin as a trophy. But when our old Colonel heard the story, he shook his head, and looked at me in a way that made me feel rather ashamed of myself.

"M. De Launay," said he, very gravely, "to risk one's life in the cause of duty is the act of a brave man; to risk it uselessly, for the sake of a mere boast, is that of a fool. Always remember that in future."

And I *have* remembered it ever since.

THE PERSISTENT PANTHER.

*A WILD PURSUER ON A NIGHT JOURNEY.—FOUGHT OFF
WITH DYNAMITE.*

BY WARREN L. WATTIS.

MAX," said my partner, "we must do something decisive very soon, or lose the cabin."

"Is it so bad as that?" I asked, putting down my pen and pushing back the map which I had been lettering.

"Yes. The jam is getting stronger every minute. The water has backed up over half a mile. The pressure will soon begin to ease up for to-day, but the jam will get stronger during the night. When the thaw comes to-morrow, the water will overflow and sweep down here unless we can break the jam first."

My companion and I were employed by a lumber company to spend five months exploring some tributaries of the Columbia River. We were charged to ascertain and report on the timber resources of the region, and the feasibility of floating logs down the streams in spring.

We had arrived in the fall, and built a cosy little cabin on a bend of what we called Catamount Creek. The name was suggested by our having seen on the bank of the stream two catamounts, panthers, or "Indian devils," as they are variously called, on the first day of our arrival.

We thought our site a good one until, in March, the floating ice jammed and threatened to back up the water and sweep our residence away. We disliked to leave our cabin, not only because we had been comfortable there, but because the rainy season was at hand. We feared the maps, drawings and

reports that we had been three months preparing would be destroyed before we could make another shelter.

"If we only had some dynamite we could break the jam," said my companion.

"I have it!" I replied. "I will tramp down the river to the camp of those prospectors. They are sure to have some, and will part with enough to help us out."

"But it's twenty miles."

"I can be back by to-morrow morning," I answered.

"All right; it's our only chance. I will stay here and get things in moving shape, in case of an emergency. You'd better not take your rifle. You can't afford to follow game. Say, it would be a nice thing if you could carry something to pay the miners in part for their dynamite. It is very precious to them."

"I will," I said. So I started, carrying a half-bushel of potatoes, two dozen apples and some old magazines. By keeping along the south sides of the cañons, where the sun shone very little, I had pretty secure footing. Only twice, while crossing small valleys, did I need to use my snow-shoes.

I reached the miner's camp about eight o'clock. We ate a hearty supper, and talked for over an hour as only men can talk when they see a new face for the first time in months. They gave me about twenty pounds of giant powder, a dozen primers and a coil of fuse. About ten o'clock I started on my return trip.

For the first hour I did not advance very fast, as I had only the starlight to guide me. Then the moon rose. The country through which I was going was covered by strips of heavy timber alternating with clear patches of snow.

I had obtained what I went to get, and my success, combined with the beauty of the night, made me unusually light-hearted. As I walked along I hummed snatches of old songs, and lived over again in my thoughts pleasant experiences of my boyhood. The bright moonlight sifted through slightly swaying branches above me, and made a glorious network of shadow and sparkle on the snow. All

seemed enchantment, till suddenly I had a distinct sensation that somebody or something was following me.

I listened, but could neither hear nor see anything strange. Nevertheless, I could not rid myself of the impression. I emerged from the strip of timber, crossed another clear place, and then plunged into a thickly timbered region. While in the midst of this, I became more and more convinced that I was being followed. Listening intently, I thought I could hear a crackling of bushes and a stealthy movement of feet on the snow.

I hurried through, crossed another clearing, and paused on the edge of the next woodland. The moonbeams fell with glistening splendour on the patch of pure white snow behind me, but I could not see any living thing, nor could I now detect any sound of stealthy feet. Nevertheless, I wished I had brought with me at least a revolver.

With my pocket-knife I cut a stout cudgel, and set out once more. In cutting the stick I awkwardly made a gash in my hand, from which some blood dropped as I walked along.

I had almost reached another clearing when I heard unmistakable sounds of something following me. They were louder than before and less stealthy. Besides the swish of bushes, there was a snuffing sound, as of some wild animal. I hastened through the strip of woods, crossed a short, open space, and hid behind a tree in the next strip. The sounds came nearer. Then out into the shadow of the trees came a long, dark body. It skirted upward along the edge of the woods for a short distance, and then came slowly out into the moonlight. I then clearly recognised the lithe form of a panther.

The beast struck downward, regained my trail, and then came cautiously forward, snuffing in turn the air and snow. I clutched my stick and darted directly toward the animal, shouting at every bound. For an instant the beast faced me; then he turned, and was out of sight and hearing in a few seconds.

I laughed then to think of my fear at a pursuer so easily

disposed of, and started on through the next wide stretch of woods. Before I was half-way through I heard, with a shiver of genuine fear, the sound of the beast renewing his chase.

Twice I caught glimpses of his long body and gleaming eyes away among the trees. I tried to keep up courage, in spite of the cruel fact that I, unarmed, was being hunted by a powerful and ferocious animal. He was sneaking after me, looking for a good opportunity to get close enough to spring upon my back. The panther, though he hesitates to attack, is as persistent as he is ferocious, and sometimes follows a man for many hours before making an onslaught.

I crossed another clearing. Just as I started to enter the woods, the tawny body of my foe glided out of the opposite line of trees. Brandishing my stick, I rushed at him again. He retreated into the bush, and then crouched in a manner so threatening that I halted.

Now I got a clear view of the panther. Up to this time he had seemed awkward and ungainly, but now, as he lay with his lithe body pressed against the snow, he seemed to resemble some huge javelin which an unseen arm was about to hurl.

I slowly retreated backward. As I regained the edge of the clearing the panther arose, skirted upward a short distance, then darted across the opening and entered the wood in advance of me. I reasoned that if I entered that stretch of wood the brute would hurl himself upon me before I could reach the other edge.

By making a detour of a quarter of a mile I could reach the next clearing without having to enter the forest. This I proceeded to do, being careful to keep as near the middle of the open stretch as possible.

I had not gone far when the panther again reappeared at the edge of the wood. He now seemed bolder and more excited. Twice he came clear out of the shadow of the woods. I could then see the gleam of his eyes in the moonlight, and how his tail kept lashing his bony sides.

Fire, I knew, would frighten the brute. I had plenty of

matches, but there was no dry wood at hand. Indeed I should hardly have dared to stop and collect it if there had been.

Then I thought of the fuse that I was carrying. Forthwith I cut a piece about two feet long from the roll. Then I pressed a snowball about one end of the fuse, and lighted the other end. As it gave the first "spit" I hurled the missile at the catamount. It struck just beyond him. He straightway moved around beyond it, and stood watching the glowing spark and the swirl of smoke. Meanwhile I hastened onward, preparing another piece of fuse.

Not until the first bit had ceased to smoke did the animal renew his attention to me. When he approached I repeated the ruse. But this time it did not detain him long. He snuffed around the smoking line a few seconds, and then strode contemptuously over it toward me.

It was plain that it would take something more fiery than a piece of fuse to keep him from trying to sup on me.

Then I took one of the dynamite cartridges from the bag, untwisted one end of the paper covering, and applied the match to it, just as the panther appeared sulking in the timber close by. As it blazed up I tossed the flaming cartridge toward him.

This seemed to puzzle him, and he remained snuffing at a respectful distance from the blazing cartridge until it went out.

Oh, if it would only explode, I thought! Explode! Dynamite does not explode except by powerful concussion. But I had fuse and primers for exploding it. Why had I not thought of this before?

I determined to discharge some underneath his nose even if I had to risk blowing myself to fragments. Anything would be better than to fall a prey to those splendid, cruel teeth and those long, quivering claws.

I drew a single cartridge of the dynamite from the bag. As I started to prepare it I realised with some loss of hope that it was "frozen." The oil of the mixture had solidified and it would not be so sure to explode. But danger quickened

my thoughts. I tore open the clothing above my breast and thrust the tube underneath my left arm. Clutching the clammy thing close to my steaming body, I hastened on.

I had hardly any hope that my efforts would thwart the cunning beast. His game was to tire me out and spring on me unexpectedly. Already the details of the last scene pictured themselves to my mind. He would fell me to the snow. I would make a few feeble efforts to stab him with my clasp-knife, but the gleaming white teeth would close upon my throat.

That would be the end of me. My partner, when out looking for me, would come across my mangled form and guess the truth.

In spite of these forebodings I continued to work for my salvation. I cut a piece of fuse two feet long from the roll. One end I cut off perfectly smooth and even, while I made a slight split in the other. Next I selected a primer and blew several times down into the tube to be sure that no foreign substance covered the powder. Then I pushed the even end of the fuse down into the tube close against the layer of white powder at the bottom.

Lastly, as there was no safer way, I pressed with my teeth the upper edge of the tube against the fuse until the latter was held firmly in place.

In the hasty backward glances which I cast from time to time at my pursuer, I noticed that he was following just far enough behind so that I could not rush past him.

On examination I found that the stick of dynamite underneath my arm had thawed, and the materials had fused again. Into one end of this putty-like mass I pressed the primer attached to the fuse, and squeezed the mixture tightly about it.

Taking off the wool toque from my head, I wrapped the bomb in it. Then about the whole I knotted my long knitted sash. I also threw all the other explosives from me. The panther sprang with long leaps at the bag.

Just ahead near the end of the clearing, there was a little knoll. I hastened to the top of this and faced about. The

panther was sniffing around the bag of dynamite about two hundred feet away. As I paused, he left the bag and started straight toward me. I knew that the final struggle was at hand.

With hands that trembled in spite of my efforts at self-control, I applied a match to the fuse. It began to hiss and sputter. For a few seconds I deliberated whether it would not be better to clutch the thing to my side, close with the infuriated animal, and let the explosion blow us both to fragments as we struggled.

He reached the foot of the little knoll. I tossed the bundle at him as he sprang forward. He seized it as a cat does a rat, and shook it so hard that I feared it would fly in pieces. Then a disdainful stroke from a long paw sank the bundle into the snow and my foe crouched as for a long spring.

I dared not move a muscle. I knew that my slightest movement would be the signal for the beast to make his leap. Could I stand fixedly facing those blazing eyes for thirty seconds?

The gaunt, tawny body was pressed against the snow. The drawn lips exposed the long, gleaming teeth. A thin line of smoke, to which he gave no attention, swirled up close beside him. In a moment all was transformed.

There was an explosion that hurled a great quantity of snow into my face and flung me down. I jumped up, cleared my eyes, and looked for the panther. There were only pieces of panther left.

I went back, picked up the bag of unexploded dynamite, and went on. That morning my partner broke the jam. Next day he carried ten pounds of the dynamite back to the miners. On his return he followed my trail to the knoll, and secured enough fragments of panther skin to make him a cap.

OUT WEST.



"ON THE WAK PATH"

OUT WEST.

BESIEGED BY WOLVES

BY RICHARD VANL.

I.

THE WOLVES ASSEMBLE.

ABOUT sixty years ago, on a wintry afternoon, in November, Jonas Barton, son of a farmer in northern New England, obtained an hour of leisure, and employed it in searching a neighbouring forest for pitch knots. The knots of fallen or maimed pine-trees were greatly prized by the boys for their brilliant flame in burning. By the light they gave, many a student of that day, seated in the chimney corner, worked out his problems in arithmetic and memorised his geography lessons.

Jonas had one great grievance—his father would not permit him to venture alone beyond the borders of the forest, which was still infested by bears and wolves.

To Jonas's mind a fight with either of these ferocious animals was something to seek rather than to avoid. He was an unusually good marksman for one of his age. During the previous autumn he had bestowed the fatal shot upon a black bear that had been cornered by a hunting-party in the neighbourhood of his home.

This afternoon, when he was going to Barton's Hill, where large wild animals were seldom seen, Jonas took his gun.

thinking he might encounter game. The winter had been a severe one, and wolves, made bold by hunger, had been unusually fierce and destructive.

Mr. Barton's home was the last house in the valley between the mountains to the west and Barton's Hill, which was about one-third of a mile north-east of the house. The nearest neighbour was half a mile down the valley.

Jonas went across the fields toward the hill, dragging a clumsy hand-sled which he intended to load with pine knots. The air was perfectly still. Jonas noticed that the sky was heavy with the leaden clouds, hanging motionless in the sky, that so often precede a snowstorm.

"It's a lucky thing I got off this noon," he said to himself with a weather-wise look. "There is a storm brewing."

Just then he caught a glimpse of a moving form in the underbrush on his left. He stopped, dropped the cord of his hand-sled, stepped forward, brought his gun to position, and strained his eyes to discern the object more clearly. He then saw two creatures closely following each other along the edge of the woods.

As he began to stride after them the howl of a wolf echoed through the forest at his right. Jonas was not more than twenty rods from the woods. At the howl he turned to face the point whence the sound came, but could see nothing there. Then he looked again for the creatures ahead of him with the suppressed exclamation, "**Perhaps** they're wolves, too!" But they had disappeared from view.

Another and a prolonged howl in a different direction from the first now gave Jonas to understand that there must be a pack of wolves on Barton's Hill. His first impulse was to plunge into the forest in the hope of securing a wolf for a trophy; but even as he started to act on it a chorus of howls made him pause to reflect.

"Father says that he'd rather meet a big bear than two wolves any time, and that sounds as if there might be half a dozen of the brutes in there," he mused. "Guess I'll go home and get him and the boys, so we can all pitch in together."

This was not an agreeable thing for Jonas to do, and he actually walked toward the forest, despite his wise reflection; but a fresh outburst of threatening howls sent him homeward on the run, dragging his hand-sled, eager to lose no time before beginning the hunt.

On reaching a low rise of land about half-way home he heard his name called loudly by several voices. A moment later he met his father and his brothers John and Will with guns in their hands and excited faces.

"Well, we didn't expect ever to see you again, Jonas!" said his father, gasping. Then, turning toward the buildings below them, he shouted at the top of his voice, "All right! all right!"

A woman standing by the corner of the house waved a handkerchief in response.

"What's the matter?" asked Jonas in surprise.

"Didn't you see any wolves?" cried the boys. "The pine woods are full of 'em over on the hill."

"Why, how do you know? You haven't been up there," said Jonas.

"Well, Cyrus Brown started to come down through the valley this morning at daybreak, and he saw crowds of 'em coming down from the mountains and crossing the valley this side of Stony Brook."

"Crowds of 'em!" gasped Jonas.

"Yes, scores!" replied his father. "He climbed a tree and counted 'em till they got to be so thick he couldn't tell one from another. He says 'twas enough to make a man's blood run cold to see the savage varminths snarling and fighting amongst themselves, and still all acting as if they'd planned for a regular march over to the hill. He didn't dare to come through the valley, so he went back home and took his horse and rode around here to give the alarm. Every man over in his neighbourhood is out on guard by the edge of the woods."

"Well, what are we going to do?" cried Jonas. "Can't we go in and kill some of 'em while other folks are getting ready to attack 'em? Here's four of us."

"Won't you charge in on 'em all by yourself, Jonas?" asked his father ironically.

"I did, almost. I found there were wolves in the woods before I got there by their howling."

The cry of a wolf was borne along the still air as Jonas rapidly told his story.

"It's well you started back for us," said Mr. Barton gravely. "But we've no time to talk. You must saddle your horse and go down through the town and drum up every man you can find to come over here. John's going the other way, and Will and I and the neighbours are going to watch while you're gone. We can't do anything against so many of them until there's more of us together."

As Jonas and John hastened to get their horses they met some of the farmers in the valley, each carrying a gun and wearing a knife in his belt, hurrying to the hill above.

The surrounding towns were thinly peopled, and the boys rode many miles in search of volunteers. Every one was anxious to take part in the fight, and an unusual hilarity prevailed among the sober-minded folk. They had little recreation other than hunting, and now that hunting seemed a work of necessity as well they were highly pleased.

The November day was even shorter than usual because of the mask of dark clouds which shut out the face of the sun. When Jonas was within a mile of home on his return twilight settled around him.

"Won't be much chance to fight 'em to-night," he muttered in disappointment.

When he rode into the farmyard and saw his father and John quietly currying a horse Jonas asked anxiously, "Has anything happened? The wolves ain't gone, are they?"

"Don't worry on that point, young man," said his father with a grim smile. "They're around yet. Who is coming?"

"Oh, everybody! I've been all over Grayfield and Latham and Freetown, and I guess every live man is coming. But what can we do in the dark?"

"We're going to have a lot of fires burning all round the

hill and watch by 'em all night," said Mr. Barton, "to scare the brutes and keep 'em from coming out and trying to get our sheep and cattle. That's about all we can do until morning."

"Oh can I watch?" Jonas asked eagerly.

"No. You boys must all go to bed and get what sleep you can. There are plenty of men to watch, and we don't want any drowsy boys around."

At this Jonas looked much disconcerted.

"You needn't be troubled, Jonas," added his father. "If you don't get enough of fighting wolves before sundown to-morrow then I'll miss my guess. General Thornby is coming from Blackwater in the morning to command the hunt, and we're going to make a regular attack on the hill. We shall want everybody that can hold a gun then."

"Hooray!" shouted Jonas. "I'll go to bed as soon as it's dark if I can have my share of the fun to-morrow!"

By the time darkness had really fallen many small, brightly blazing fires encircled the hill. A few skilled marksmen were posted by each fire to replenish it, to keep it from spreading, and to maintain a sharp look-out for wolves. Bold indeed would be the wolf that should venture against the besiegers.

The night was intensely dark, and every circumstance increased the strangeness of the scene. To the boys, who were at the wildest pitch of excitement, sleep was impossible during the early hours of the night.

Frequent far-away howls came from the forest through their open chamber window. Toward morning they fell asleep. Jonas awoke with a start in the grey light of a still clouded morning sky. With a shout to arouse the others he flung on his clothes and dashed down to the kitchen.

His father and about twenty other men were there, drinking hot coffee and eating breakfast. The visitors had all brought coarse bread and bacon with them.

"This is the boy who was afraid the wolves would run away before morning," said one smiling farmer. "You didn't know that we killed 'em all in the night just to spoil your fun, did you, Jonas?"

Jonas took the banter with good humour and was very ready to obey when his father spoke.

"Now, Jonas, eat your breakfast and get ready for work. Be sure that your gun's in good order, and that your horn and pouch are full. Then go down to the 'frontier' and relieve one of the watchmen. We're taking turns in coming up to get our coffee."

A little later Jonas was at the "frontier." The fires had been stamped out and carefully extinguished. There was silence through the forest save for an occasional snarl near by or a mournful cry in the distance. Men were coming in from all directions. Jonas need not have played sentinel, but he preferred to do so.

About nine o'clock General Thornby, who had been an officer in the War of 1812, arrived, summoned the old soldiers in the company about him, and consulted them as to the best course to pursue. This was soon decided, and the general, seated on his horse, shouted his instructions.

"Boys," said he, "there must be fully a hundred of us here. How many are there on the further side of the hill?"

"About the same number, general," he was answered.

"And they are coming all the time," said another voice.

"Well," said the general, "we want all the men that we can get. Let us wait till noon; by that time all who are coming will be here. Let no man go nearer the woods than the guards are now, and don't let a shot be fired, if it can be helped, until we're all together."

Then the general rode away to visit the volunteers on the opposite side of the hill.

There he arranged the men in two companies. The members of the larger company were told to form a close picket line half-way around the hill, and to take additions to their number as they might arrive. The other company, all crack shots, were to charge into the forest and attack the wolves at a signal from the general's silver whistle.

Having completed these arrangements, the general and

his companions returned to the western slope of the hill. It was now nearly noon.

When General Thornby had surveyed the volunteers he announced that there must be about four hundred men bivouacking on both sides of the hill, and that he considered this force large enough to advance upon the wolves. He then proceeded to station the men as he had their comrades on the opposite side of the hill.

To Jonas, faithfully discharging picket duty, the morning hours had seemed very long. Now, as he saw the little army forming in military array, he began to realise that his chance to distinguish himself amidst such a company, many of whom had been soldiers in their youth, was small indeed.

Just as General Thornby had decided that his force of picked riflemen for the charge was complete, the farmer who had bantered Jonas in the morning—a veteran of noted courage and skill in marksmanship—said to the commander,—

"General, if you'll allow me to make the suggestion, there's one more chap here that should have a chance with us."

"And who is he, Webster?" inquired the general. "I'll take your word for any man in the company."

"Well, he's only a boy as yet, but he's as good a shot as there is in the town. His name is Jonas Barton—Ephraim's son."

Jonas started at this unexpected compliment and reddened with delighted surprise.

"Jonas Barton, come forward," said General Thornby; and Jonas strode into the open space between the two bodies of men.

General Thornby surveyed his tall, muscular figure and animated face approvingly.

"Barton, take your place by your friend Webster," said the general, smiling.

With a salute to the officer and a quick, triumphant glance toward his father, who was among the riflemen, Jonas took his position.

"Much obliged," he whispered excitedly to Webster. "I'll do something for you some time."

"Well now, boy, remember if you come to grief I shall be to blame for it. You may be as brave as a lion, but don't make a fool of yourself and rush into danger when there's no need of it," said Webster.

General Thornby, who was an old man, and debarred from entering the woods by unanimous vote of his "army," sat on his horse before the riflemen, who stood facing him in a long double file. At his word of command the rear line lengthened until its front extended about half-way about the base of the hill. This movement carried its outer wings within speaking distance of the riflemen who were similarly deployed on the other side. Then the general blew a long blast on his whistle. Instantly there came responsive shouts of "Ready!" from the men behind the hill.

The whistle sounded again, briefly, three times, and as the echoes died away the riflemen marched briskly toward the forest.

General Thornby stayed with the men who were drawn up ready to meet such of the wolves as might break out from the woods through the advance line.

The heavy undergrowth about presented a serious obstacle to the advance of so many charging men. As Jonas and his companions plunged into the thicket they were greeted by a burst of howls from their beleaguered enemies.

Despite Jonas's stout heart, he shivered at the sound, and felt a creeping chill on his limbs. He left the open daylight with one quick, backward glance, and, entering the gloom of the forest, caught a glimpse of a gaunt, grey creature directly before him.

II.

CAGED BY THE ENEMY.

As Jonas, entering the forest, saw the wolf before him, his nervousness gave way to a furious desire to slay the grey beast; but before the boy could take aim the creature sprang over a fallen log, which hid its flight. Jonas hurried to the log,

mounted it, looked in vain for the wolf, jumped down, and ran on up the hill through underbrush.

He had not gone two hundred yards when, to his amazement, a great sound of firing broke out behind him. At this he turned and realised that he was quite alone.

While Jonas stood astonished that he should have advanced so far beyond his friends, General Thornby was scarcely less surprised to see some thirty wolves break out of the woods, followed by the line of men who had entered the forest a few minutes earlier. In a short time all the brutes had been shot down.

"Why, we thought the whole army of them had broke out past us, or else we shouldn't have followed them out," cried Webster, Jonas's friend.

"Charge in again!" cried the general. "So many dead, so many less for you to meet in the wood."

"Why, what on earth's come of Jonas?" said Webster, as he hurried uphill again.

"Likely he's further along on the line. We got all mixed up, anyhow," said Webster's neighbour; and as this explanation of the boy's disappearance seemed reasonable, Webster dismissed the matter from his mind.

Soon Jonas once more could hear the shouts of men somewhere below him. Then the musketry began again off toward his left.

It increased quickly in volume. He was about to hurry in that direction when he heard shots and shouts as if from the top of the hill. Probably echoes of the lower firing misled him, but he supposed the men from the further side had already reached the summit.

Jonas charged straight upward to meet them. He was not completely acquainted with the ground he must traverse, but supposed he knew it well.

Now he was following the border of a deep ravine, the upper part of which was always dry except during rains, while the lower part was the bed of a swift brook fed by springs from the hillside, * Jonas had just passed one of these springs

with a longing glance, but did not pause to quench his thirst. Suddenly a savage snarl stopped him. He looked up. A large wolf was in the act of leaping down upon him from the top of a boulder.

Jonas fired into the very jaws of the beast, which dropped at his feet without a sound and rolled down the ravine out of sight. The lad watched him for one moment, and then looked to see if another were coming.

He looked none too soon. A second wolf, without the warning the first one had given, was springing from the same vantage-ground. Jonas had not had time to reload his gun. He clubbed it, and at the same time obeyed an impulse to step aside and let the creature's impetus carry him down the hill a little way.

But Jonas had forgotten the ravine. He stepped over the edge just as the wolf shot past him. Throwing up both hands to regain his balance, he lost his gun, and fell directly into the trough of the ravine, which was nearly perpendicular at that point. He struck on rocks, and did not stop there. In vain he snatched at roots and jutting rocks. Over and over he rolled down the rough watercourse.

When he had struck the rock first one arm had been doubled beneath him, and now it was helpless. His fall hurt him keenly. Half fainting, he rolled down and down, wondering if wolves were waiting for him at the bottom.

Suddenly he was aroused by splashing into cold water. It came over his face and into his eyes and mouth, while he seemed to be lying in a soft bed.

Struggling up, he gazed confusedly about, and saw that he had fallen into the shallow pool of the lowest spring in the ravine. Already feeling revived, he leaned over and drank eagerly.

He then attempted to rise to his feet; but the terrible pain in his arm gave him a faint and sick sensation, and the forest danced so queerly about him that he was glad to reach a seat at the foot of an overhanging tree. He looked about him and tried to consider what was best to do.

Plainly he could not climb the hill for his gun ; and, indeed, it would be useless if he had it. His powder-horn had lost its plug and had been damped in the spring. Besides, it would be dangerous to go either up or down unarmed, even if he were capable of the exertion.

The noise of the battle came more faintly to him. It was no longer inspiring, but dreadful. It spoke of many wolves still alive in the woods.

Jonas could see no escape from the wolves save by climbing a tree. He felt that the wild animals might appear at any moment. He staggered to his feet and managed to reach a pine whose branches spread so low that ordinarily he could have swung himself into them with perfect ease.

But he found, to his dismay, that the feat was impossible now. Sick and faint, he dropped upon a flat stone under the tree helplessly, and leaned against the mossy trunk with a feeling of despairing resignation to his fate.

This passed away, however, at the sound of scampering feet on the dry pine needles which carpeted the upper side of the ravine. He lifted his eyes in time to see a wolf disappearing down the hillside, apparently without having seen him. This nerved Jonas to further efforts.

"I won't give up this way," he muttered. "A fellow would be a fool to sit down and let the wolves make a meal of him. I must put my wits to work some way."

He rose to his feet and walked back to the spring, reeling at every step, but keeping his feet nevertheless. Against the tree which stood close to the spring he stood and looked earnestly around for some means of escape.

Almost instantly an idea came to him. Just above the spring there was a hole excavated by water in the side of the ravine. It was now dry. It was a small place, but a perfect cavern none the less, with rocky walls and floor. It was not more than four feet in height or breadth, but it extended back into the hill for two or three yards.

More than once during previous years Jonas had explored it on his hands and knees by the light of a blazing pitch knot.

Now, as his glance rested on it, he saw that the mouth was nearly concealed by a pine-tree uprooted in a recent storm. This had fallen directly before the cave. If he could finish the barricading, he could hide within the cave until the wolves should be dispersed.

To make a barricade looked like a gigantic task in view of his crippled condition and his pain ; but it was easier than to climb a tree. Jonas summoned all his fortitude and began the work.

Pine branches were scattered over the ravine. Jonas selected the greenest of them as best fitted to his purpose. Stumbling nervously about and listening breathlessly for the approach of wolves, he hastily thrust several of these branches inside the cave, and then interlaced others above and below the fallen tree till they formed a thick network over the mouth of the cave, leaving only room for his entrance at one corner.

As he was about to creep into the cave he instinctively caught up three or four pine knots which lay near, and took them in with him. Completely exhausted now, and warned by the howls of approaching wolves, he crept weakly into his shelter. With the last remnant of his energy he succeeded in wreathing some branches over the place of his entrance. Then, with the din of the battle filling his ears and rasping his trembling nerves, he sank down and lost consciousness.

How long a time passed before Jonas revived he could not tell. Probably it was but a moment. He was aroused by snarls and howls. Lifting himself on his uninjured arm, he peered cautiously out through a hole in his barricade.

A large pack of wolves, some of them wounded, were fleeing down the hill on the further edge of the ravine, dodging swiftly among the trees. Jonas heard the echoing shouts of the riflemen and their quick tramping in the dry underbrush, while the air resounded with shots and was heavy with the smell of powder ; but no one was within view.

"They're driving the wolves," Jonas muttered ruefully, "and I haven't any hand in it !"

Just as he was beginning to wish himself outside the cave,

thinking that he might attract the attention of some hunter; by shouting, he saw two wolves, large and gaunt, leap down the bed of the ravine.

Opposite Jonas's fort the wolves stopped and sniffed the air hungrily. Then they walked to the spring and lapped the water. Jonas hoped to see them go on after satisfying their thirst; but the two animals walked about the pool, sniffing the air and searching the ground with their sharp noses.

With uncomfortable thrills Jonas saw them follow his tracks, circling about over the little space where he had gathered the branches, and finally come directly toward the cave.

Jonas kept still as the grave. Then he was horrified to see the wolves come up to the mouth of the cave. They began to claw the boughs, and tried to insert their noses between the matted branches of Jonas's defence.

The boy now experienced a terrible feeling of helplessness as he realised that there was nothing but a mesh of pine boughs between himself and the two enraged and starving beasts. His only weapon was a jack-knife, and he had but one hand with which he could use it.

Jonas felt a vague hope that the wolves might be unable to get into the place, or that they might rush on to join the pack. Perhaps one of the hunters might follow the course of the ravine in his descent of the hill. But the tumult of the hunt was receding far away below him, while there was unbroken silence above.

The two wolves scratched and nosed about the place for a few minutes. Then they sat down before the cave, with their fiery eyes fastened on the defence. Jonas realised that the savage creatures were determined to wait for their prey.

In the shadow of the forest the daylight was fast fading. With his knowledge of wolf nature Jonas could not doubt that the beasts would make stronger efforts to reach him under the cover of night, and he could not doubt that they would get in. Hours might pass before he would be missed by the company, and then they would have no clue to his place of refuge.

Cold drops of perspiration started out on the boy's forehead.

His physical distress was increasing every moment. His face burned and his head ached. His shoulders were chilled through and through, and his wet, half-frozen clothing clung to his stiffened limbs until they seemed to be congealing. The pain in his arm was excruciating.

"The tables are fairly turned," muttered Jonas. "This morning I was helping besiege you hungry brutes, but now you have got me in a tighter fix than we had you in."

The gathering darkness reminded Jonas of his pine knots, and he began a search for his tinder-box, trembling lest he should have lost or wet it in the spring. To his delight, he found it in an inner pocket, safe and dry.

Moving as cautiously as possible, he found a loose stone on the floor of the cave, and with trembling, uncertain hand endeavoured to strike a spark from the wall against which he leaned. It was a difficult task, but at last he succeeded in lighting his tinder and setting fire to one of the knots.

"I suppose the smoke will about smother me," he mused; "but I'd as soon die of suffocation as be eaten by wolves."

But the knot burned with a clear flame and little smoke. Gently Jonas worked, a small open space in the lower part of the barricade with his knife. With menacing growls the wolves advanced toward it, though cautiously, as if fearful of a trap. At this Jonas thrust the burning knot close to the hole. The wolves recoiled with angry snarls from the blaze of light and seated themselves some distance away.

Jonas's hope revived. He felt that he was safe as long as the knots lasted.

The forest was strangely quiet now. He could hear distant shouts and an occasional shot at the foot of the hill, but the only sound in the woods was the murmur of the rising wind. Darkness was fast settling about his pitiful little fort.

Across the ravine the huge trees were becoming indistinct in the gloom. Still those two pairs of blazing eyes watched Jonas's little fire with unflinching steadiness.

Occasionally the wolves walked about a little, and they kept at a few yards' distance from the cave, but showed no

intention of going further away. Jonas in turn watched them, and, seeing that even if his light held them in check it would not drive them away, he felt sure that his danger would be increased when the knots were burned out.

Rising to a sitting position and leaning his dizzy head against the mouth of the cave, he attempted to shout for help, in the hope that a party might already be searching for him. His voice died away in his parched throat ; and after repeated efforts had ended in failure he gave up and lay down on his stony bed.

After resting a few moments he lighted the second knot. There were but two more. The rapidity with which they burned was alarming ; yet if he had measured the moments by his suffering he would have called them hours.

By the time that the third knot was consumed Jonas was yielding, despite himself, to drowsiness, for the air in the cave had become warmer and his pain less keen. But, knowing how much sleep would increase his danger, he aroused himself, lighted the fourth and last of the precious knots, and then, to throw off his drowsiness, began to move about the cave on his knees.

The motion soon brought back his sensibilities, so that it was difficult for him to keep from crying out with pain. His strength was soon exhausted, and he was compelled to sink down again at the mouth of the cave.

The atmosphere was heavy with smoke now. Jonas turned his back to the tiny fire and lay with his face close to the boughs to get a breath of the clear air from without. The warmth about his shoulders and renewed stillness on his part made him again drowsy.

He tried to drag himself about the cave again, but he was too weak to do so. As his eyes closed heavily and the throbbing in his head grew less painful, he muttered despairingly,—

“ Well, anyway, I’ve done the best I could.”

He knew nothing more until awakened by a confused noise close by. The knot had burned out, leaving a few

tiny, fading embers. Close by Jonas's ear there was a low, eager whining, and he suddenly realised that a rough head was thrust partly into the space where he had burned the knots.

He had forgotten how easily his foes could make an entrance here when the fire was gone; but as the thought flashed upon him now he muttered, "It's come."

Grasping his clumsy but keen-edged knife, he rolled over, determined to fight as long as possible.

At that moment he caught the gleam of a moving light in the ravine, and with reviving hope called, "Hello!" frantically.

The sound was faint and weak, and was only answered by a joyful bark by his side. The bark was ineffable music to his ears.

"Tige!" he cried eagerly, and with a short struggle and a loud yelp of delight a dark object scrambled into the cave. It was the old family dog, who had been shut up the previous day to keep him from the fight with the wolves. As he licked Jonas's face and hands there was a rush of footsteps outside, and familiar voices shouting, "Jonas, where are you?"

Jonas had just enough strength to say, "In here, behind the pine-tree."

He knew that swift hands were tearing away the obstruction, but after that he realised nothing fully until he was lying on the broad settle at home, wrapped in hot blankets, by the roaring fire, while the village doctor was gently binding up his shattered arm.

"It will be a long while before he can use it again," that important personage was saying, as he deftly rolled a bandage about the bruised flesh. "But he is fortunate to save it at all."

"How did the battle come out?" was Jonas's first question.

"Well, as for the battle, it was a big thing," said Webster, who was assisting the doctor. "You missed a good deal, Jonas. Such a hunt as none of us ever saw before, and probably never will again! 'Twas a sight worth seeing when

the varmints broke from the woods and found how they were trapped. Such a yelling was never heard."

"How many did you kill?" asked Jonas.

"We killed over a hundred of 'em right within forty feet of the woods; but in spite of all that, the biggest part of 'em got away across the valley. You might just as well have tried to stop the wind from blowing as to stop them. But I don't believe they'll come back very soon."

Indeed, wolves never were known to cross the valley again.

Jonas was ill a long time; but he felt quite consoled for all his suffering when one day General Thornby came to see him, and, after hearing his story, said,—

"Well, my boy, if you missed the best of the fight, you proved your grit in defending yourself more than the rest of us did in fighting."

A compliment from the old soldier was something never to be forgotten.

OUTWITTING THE SIOUX.

BY MYRON B. GIBSON.

OLD Thad Bainbridge, my guide and companion on frequent hunting and fishing trips among the lakes of the Park region of Minnesota, had paddled those waters when the Sioux, the original possessors of that beautiful section, were numerous. Not the least pleasure of these trips was that of listening to the old man's tales of those early days.

"I've played many a trick on the redskins," said old Thad, speaking in a slovenly dialect that I will not transcribe, "but the neatest scheme I ever worked on them was one I played on a couple of Sioux one summer in the forties.

"I had frozer my feet the winter before, and was not well able to get round on the prairie, so I made up my mind to take a good long rest and get ready for the fall trapping. With that idea I rigged up a brush camp on the creek that joins these two big lakes, and took things easy.

"I had been having a nice quiet time all by myself for a month or more before I knew there was an Indian within fifty miles. I could kill a deer any day within half a mile of camp, so I hunted just enough to keep meat on hand. Most of my time I spent fishing and paddling about, and speculating where I'd be likely to find the best trapping that fall.

"Thinking about Indians didn't trouble me a bit. I had had so many brushes with the Sioux, and had always made them suffer so much and then got out of their way so mysteriously, that they had sized me up as a great medicine-man, with a special manitou to look out for me. They meant to keep out of my way, and I knew it.

"But I didn't go round with my eyes shut, I can tell you, for I knew too much about Indians to expect them to stay in one mind.

"One warm morning I got into my canoe and started for the upper lake. You know there are lots of bulrushes round that lake, and I needed about a canoe-load of them to stop the leaks in my cabin roof.

"After I had cut a lot of the bulrushes and tied them in bundles about as big around as my body, I laid them in the bottom of the canoe and paddled farther up the lake for a little fishing. You recollect that place betwixt the island and the point of timber where we struck that school of big black bass last summer? Well, there were far more bass there forty years ago.

"I cut me a good pole among the willows on the island, and tied a big rock fast to the rope at the bow of my canoe. Then I paddled close to the island, hoisted the rock overboard for an anchor, and began fishing.

"It was about the first of July, and the hot sun made me sleepy. There I sat, nodding and starting awake to pull in a fish whenever I felt a jerk. But caution prevented me from falling completely asleep, and I tell you it was lucky for me that I did occasionally open my eyes wide and take a good look around. For one of those times I caught sight of a canoe crossing the upper end of the lake.

"There were two redskins in it, and they were about half a mile away. I guessed at once how they happened to be there. They had come from above, and started down the lake when they caught sight of me, and hurried up to get ashore and under cover before I'd see them.

"I knew they had their eyes on me, and I knew it wouldn't do to let them know that I had sighted them. So I pretended to keep on fishing while I watched them out of the corner of my eye. I knew well what their game would be. The shores of the lake were all prairie excepting the island and the big wooded point. I was anchored between those two bits of woodland. The Indians meant to sneak into the mainland woods, and shoot me from that point.

"Well, those two reds made their paddles fly till they reached shore. Then they pulled their canoe up into the bulrushes out of sight. Next they cut across the prairie, bending so low that I could see nothing of them in the tall grass except the hump of their backs now and then.

"They were hurrying to get behind the shelter of the woods. Once there, they would take their time to creep up and pop me over, for I was close to the shore.

"I sat still as a mouse till they went out of sight behind the trees. By that time I had my plans all ready. I might have paddled behind the island and got away easily, but it wasn't in my style of those days to run away from two Indians. Besides, I knew that I'd soon have a whole tribe of Sioux after me if I let those two carry away the news that they had seen me.

"'Much obliged to you, my copper-coloured friends, for going behind the bushes while I make my toilet,' said I to myself. 'If you will just wait till I slick up a bit, I'll surprise you.'

"The minute they went out of sight I pulled up my anchor-stone, and put that big rock into one of my bundles of bulrushes. I did not take the anchor rope off the rock, but just tied the bulrushes firmly round the stone.

"Next I took off my buckskin coat and buttoned it round the bundle. Then I propped it up solidly in the middle of the canoe, just where I had been sitting, and I clapped my old hat on top of it.

"Finally I stuck the butt of my fishing-pole among the other bundles of bulrushes, and set it slanting out over the water in front of the dummy I had dressed up.

"In my pocket I had a heavy two-hundred feet line that I used for trolling with live frogs. I tied one end of this to the dummy, and took the other end in my teeth. My intention was to swim ashore, but just as I was about to do so I reflected that the boat was not now anchored, and I might as well paddle the distance, because the Indians certainly could not see me from where they must have reached by that time.

"So I paddled to the island. Then I took out my old double-barrel and my powder-horn, and gave the canoe a shove outward. The trolling-line paid out nicely. When the canoe, with the dummy in it, had gone out to where it had been with me, I stopped it by holding the line.

"There was a gentle breeze from the island, which kept the canoe pretty steadily in place in the little channel between the island and the point the Indians were making for.

"When I saw that the dummy and fish-pole looked all right, I dodged back among the willows out of sight. Then I looked again at my dummy.

"Well, Bob, I just had to lie down and roll and laugh when I squinted at that image. It sat up—facing me—as straight as a judge, and held that pole as natural as life.

"I lay in the bushes a long time looking at the opposite shore before I saw another sign of the two Indians. The breath of wind kept the canoe well out at the end of that trolling-line. The dummy was about fifty yards from me, and about the same from the opposite bushes, to which I expected the Indians to crawl.

"By-and-by I saw one of them put out his head from behind a tree a good way back from the lake. They knew who they were after, and that made them so cautious they were a good half-hour in working their way to the point. Now and then I'd see them dodging from tree to tree. At last they reached the edge, and I could see them peeping out from among the bushes.

"I was too far off to see their looks clearly, but I imagined I saw them grinning when they got sight of that scarecrow sitting out there, fishing away so quietly with its back toward them. I could scarcely keep from laughing out loud, but I didn't for I knew I'd have some serious business on hand in a few minutes.

"Pretty soon I saw both of them poke out their rifles and take steady aim. Just when their guns cracked I gave such a pull with my line that the canoe nearly capsized, and out tumbled the dummy head-first on the side of the canoe that

had swung round nearest to me. As the bowline was tied to the stone in the dummy, the canoe was now anchored. It sort of hid the tumble from the two shooters.

"I've seen some comical things in my time, but I never wanted to laugh more than when I saw that old hat go diving for the bottom. But I kept as still as a mouse, and so did those Sioux for a spell.

"The weight of that rock kept the dummy at the bottom, but my old hat came off and rose to the top, where it floated with the fishing-pole.

"Still the two Sioux made no move. You see the rascals weren't sure they had killed me. They didn't know but I'd jumped overboard, and was hiding behind the canoe. But when they had waited long enough for me to be drowned if I hadn't come up, the wind turned the canoe round so that they could see both sides of it.

"That satisfied them, and they both came jumping out of the bushes to the edge of the water. Such a screeching and yelling with delight you never heard.

"They were both young fellows, and the idea that they had succeeded in killing the man that all their old braves half-believed was protected by some magic, just tickled them half to death. A white man's scalp and gun, and that scalp my scalp, and my old double-barrel, to carry back to their village—why, they thought they felt the biggest kind of feathers in their caps already!

"When they got tired of yelling and dancing they took off their powder-horns and bullet-pouches—about all they had on except their paint and breech-clouts—and laid them on the beach with their rifles. Then they jumped in and swam for the canoe.

"As soon as they reached it both of 'em climbed into it, and began to look round for their victim. The water was clear as crystal, but just at that place the bottom is covered with water-moss two feet deep; that's why it's such a good place for bass.

"The weight of that rock sunk the dummy so deep into

the moss that the Indians could see no sign of it. They looked and looked, and at the same time inspected and jabbered about my hatchet and knife, which I had left aboard when I landed.

"After peering down into the water for a long time, and chattering away in Sioux, one of them took hold of the rope and begun to pull up the anchor. I kept my gun on them all the time, and had the best kind of a chance at them while they were peeping into the water, but I knew I'd have as good a pop at them when they pulled up that dummy. I'd rather have let both of them get away than miss seeing their surprise when they clapped eyes on that.

"I wasn't sorry I waited, for I never saw anything to beat the look of terror and superstition on their faces when that bundle of bulrushes came to the top, with my old shirt buttoned round it.

"As they let it fall into the bottom of the boat their jaws fell so wide apart I could see almost every tooth in their heads.

"'Ugh! Ugh!' they both grunted, and their knees knocked together so they came nigh falling out of the canoe.

"I guess they begun to think the old braves knew what they were talking about when they warned them that I was an evil spirit that they'd better let alone. At any rate I never saw Indians much worse scared.

"Much as I liked the fun of watching them, I knew it wouldn't do to give them much time, as they'd be sure to jump out and swim for shore as soon as they could collect their wits.

"I didn't mean to kill either one of them, but to save myself from the rest of the tribe it was necessary to wound and capture them. So I drew a bead as close as I could on the shoulder of the biggest one.

"At the crack of my gun both of 'em fell. The one I had hit came slap down in the canoe, the other fellow jumped head-first into the water before I could get a bead on him with the other barrel.

"I ran down to the beach and watched for the swimmer to come up. My notion was that he would dive and swim for the other shore. I meant to let him have it in the hip whenever he tried to go up the bank. The distance across was about eighty yards of water, and I knew I could hit him when I pleased.

"I could hear the one in the canoe groaning with the pain of the bullet in his shoulder. Sometimes he lifted his head and looked at me. But what had become of the other?

"While I was waiting I jammed a charge into the barrel I had fired. We had no breech-loaders in those days, but I calculate I had a knack of pouring in powder and ramming patch and bullet down as fast as any living man.

"Did I keep my eye peeled meantime? My boy, a hunter in the Indian country never keeps his eye unpeeled. Don't interrupt me with no more suggestions like that.

"Just as I opened my cap-box I saw a black head come up close to the canoe. The unwounded one meant to hide behind the canoe till he could make up his mind what to do. But he came up on the wrong side.

"Next moment he was down again, but in that instant I had fired.

"I missed him on purpose, for I reckoned he would think my double barrel unloaded by the two shots.

"Next moment I had the cap fairly on the newly loaded barrel, and up he came with a yell. He laid his two hands on the canoe from behind, and lifted himself in. Next moment he untied the anchor rope, and threw the end over.

"Then he picked up a paddle. I was afraid I'd have to shoot him, but I waited to see what he meant to do. Mind, I didn't want to shoot him less'n I had to; but if I had to, I shouldn't 'a' spent much time cryin' over it.

"Well, sir, if ever there was a brave, that young fellow was one. Instead of making off, he came straight ashore at me! You see he was sure I had not another shot ready.

"He had my hatchet and knife, and I'll be hanged if he wasn't coming ashore to have it out against me with my own weapons.

"When he was within five yards I lifted my gun and put the butt to my shoulder.

"He laughed in ridicule, and shoved the canoe ashore. At that instant I didn't see what to do except shoot him; but the other Indian gave a cry from the canoe. He had seen me loading; and his word told the young brave the fix he was in.

"Well, sir, that word and my mercifulness in kind o' hesitating about shooting him was nearly the end of me, for the reckless young rascal flung my hatchet so suddenly at my head that I only just managed to dodge it. Next instant he sprang at me with the knife.

"But he jumped straight at the muzzle of my gun; and the force of the blow that he got took the breath out of him. He grabbed at it himself with both hands and fell forward. Before he could pick himself up I knocked him senseless with the butt of the gun.

"What did I do then? Why, I hauled at my trolling-line, and pretty soon it came loose from the dummy. Then I tied the hands of the one I had struck—tied them behind his back—and tied his legs and left him to come to his senses.

"When I went to the other fellow in the canoe, I found he had fainted from loss of blood. I lifted him out and tied him, too, so that he could not move in case he should revive while I was off for their guns.

"By the time I came back they had both returned to their senses. I carried the one that I had hit on the head over to where the other one was, and explained to them both, as well as I could with my limited command of their language, what I intended to do. Then I put them both into my canoe, and made for my cabin.

"Well, sir, I got the bullet out of the wounded redskin, and nursed and fed him for more than two weeks before he was able to sit up. Meantime I kept the other one bound firmly with thongs and chains from my traps. I wished I

had not felt it necessary to do so, but I knew there was no trusting him.

"As soon as I thought the wounded one was strong enough to stand the trip, I put them both in their own canoe, which I had recovered. I gave them enough to eat for a week, and placed beside them their rifles, unloaded. I gave them no ammunition, for I did not think I could trust them. Then I cut the thongs that bound the unwounded one.

" 'Young braves,' said I, 'go back to your people and tell them the white man is their friend. If Indian does not try to kill white man, white man will not kill Indian. Tell your brothers how you tried to murder me, and how I treated you. And ask them if they do not believe that a great spirit watches over me. If Indian hunts me, Indian heap die. Now go.'

"I tell you, Bob, it made me feel good for a week to see the look of joy and hope in the face of those two young savages. Did I ever see them again? Yes, and then tribe too, all good friends of mine after that.

"But it's bedtime if we're going trolling early in the morning, and I'll tell you the rest another time."

TOM CRUMP.

BY W. RICKARD.

I WAS sitting one evening in my room in the rough frame building which called itself a "Hotel" on the sign over the hall door, when my friend, Tom Crump, came in.

He looked exactly like his name—a small, wiry, nervous, bald-headed man, all pluck and go. He had a little tuft of reddish hair at each side of his head, and a smaller tuft of the same colour on each cheek to serve as a whisker. His eyes were light blue, and he had no eyebrows to speak of.

He had a clear tenor voice, and when he sang he rolled his eyes up and half-shut them, and seemed to be trying to see something in the back of his head. He could fight, too, if necessary. I do not mean that he was a fighter in the vulgar sense of the word, but that if, in the somewhat rough life of our new settlement, he was menaced with violence by even a much larger man than he, his coat and hat would be off in an instant; and it was altogether likely that in the encounter which followed, Tom's clean, nervous, muscular arms and quick, telling strokes would give him the victory.

It was in the early days of Minnesota, when there were only six miles of railway in the whole State; when all the travelling was done by stage-coach, and all the freight was carried in waggons; when St. Paul was only a half-sized town, and Minneapolis was only a single little flour-mill on the bank at St. Anthony's Falls.

The town consisted mainly of one long street, with the beginnings of cross streets opening from it. The stores and houses were all of frame, and rarely more than one storey

high, with occasional patches of wooden sidewalk in front of them. There was no church as yet, and no settled minister, though occasional services were held.

One day Tom Crump said, "Let's post up notices and start a Sunday school for the children, and though I don't pretend to be much on religion, I'll try to carry it along."

Everybody liked Tom, and there was hearty agreement from all sides. The school was started, and was a success from the beginning.

"Now I tell you all," he said, the first afternoon that he faced the expectant crowd of children, "I haven't got much education, and my own Sunday schoolin' stopped with the Ten Commandments. But we don't want to be heathens, and we all want to do right, and we've got some hymn-books and I've got my flute, and we'll make this a company concern till a regular minister comes along."

It was in every way a new town in those days.

I had gone out there like many another to make my fortune, and a card in the little weekly newspaper, which an enterprising young Yankee was printing by hand in a shanty on the principal street, informed the world that "W. Rickard, Surveyor and Civil Engineer, is prepared to do any work in his line in a first-class manner and on moderate terms."

I had been tramping over the country all one Saturday, staking off farms, and had just eaten my supper and lighted my lamp and settled down for a quiet evening, when Tom Crump came in.

I had heard him in the hall below and coming up the stairs, singing :

"Hark to the huntsman's winding horn,
As we gather home, lightly gather home!"

It was a harvest-home song. When he had opened my door without ceremony, he stood in the middle of the room with his eyes half-shut, and turned to the ceiling until he had finished the stave. Then he dropped into a chair.

"How's that, old man? Got the true ring to it? I got

it in the mail this morning from a friend in old York State, and you can just smell the yellow pumpkins and the apples, and see the harvest-waggon coming up the lane,

'As we gather home, lightly gather home!''

He shut his eyes and rolled out the words in his fine, clear tenor, as if he could see again the old farm and the faces, and hear the friendly voices of his childhood's days.

"And how goes it with you, Tom?"

"Fine as a circus," he answered. "The off mule's dead, and that's pretty hard luck for a teamster; but I've got a new stop on my flute, and the Sunday school is just a-boilin'!"

"I hear," I said, "that you've started a new school over at Pye's Corner."

"Yes. The folks over there had an idea that they'd like to start religion in a small way, and they reckoned that if I'd give 'em a lift for a few Sunday mornings they might keep the thing going. So I told 'em to get the little schoolhouse and spread the news round, and I'd see what I could do."

"An extra six miles for you and your mules?"

"No, sir! Not for the mules. I take it that Sunday was made for hard-worked beasts as much as for men—that's how I read the Fourth Commandment—and the off mule's dead, anyway. I don't mind footing it. And there's a stump in the middle of the road just before you come to the schoolhouse, and I straddle it and toot over the tunes I'm going to have, and get ready for business. And that reminds me," he went on in a cool, easy way, "of what I've come for."

"Now don't ask me to take your place," said I, "for I couldn't do it."

"I'm not going to ask you; what I want is as easy as turning your hand. I expect to have a scrimmage when I go over there to-morrow, and I want you to come along and see fair play."

"What's up now?" I asked.

"Why," he replied, crossing one leg over the other, "some of those fellows from the lumber-camp are going to try to

run the Sunday school, and raise the mischief generally, and I may have to convert 'em forcibly before they get through."

"But how does it happen," I said, "that there is going to be trouble?"

"Well, it came mostly from singing a hymn. I'd been over there three times, and had got things going nicely. They'd collected about two dozen children from all around, and they'd got as far as the First Commandment and were doing famous.

"But last Sunday one of them lumber fellows comes in and sees what's going on, and he 'haw-haws' right out, and says, 'Go it, parson! Give it to 'em, my bald-headed lamb!' and more of the same sort.

"I didn't mind his taking me for a preacher, nor the children snickering, and I didn't take no notice of him till it came to the hymn. It was a favourite tune, and the children liked to sing it, and I'd practised it particular on the stump as I come along, and I took out my flute and it started off lovely."

He threw his head back and closed his eyes and sang a couple of lines of it, and then resumed his story.

"There was a little sickly chap on the bench in front of me, and when the rest stood up to sing he never used to get up, because he was a cripple and couldn't, you know. So just as the first verse was fairly going, this lumber-camp fellow comes up and takes the little chap by the hair and lifts him to his feet and says, 'Sing, you little scamp, or I'll pull your head off!'

"The child was white with fear, and everything stopped still, and I says, very quiet, 'Let go that child.' It didn't take five seconds, but he haw-hawed in my face. I saw that if he wasn't put out there'd be an end of the Pye's Corner Sunday school. So my flute came down like lightning on his hand, and I gave him a touch with my left under his eye, and laid him out like one of his own logs over the benches.

"He was the most surprised man I ever saw, and his right

hand wasn't any more use to him than if it had the lockjaw. That's how I had to get a new stop on my flute. And that," concluded Tom, "is how there's going to be a scrimmage next Sunday."

It was not a very inviting prospect. I am a man of peace, and had every reason to keep out of quarrels. Besides, the men in lumber-camps are strong, rough fellows, and in that new, unsettled country were more than ordinarily lawless.

So I thought it over for a minute or two, and then said that it didn't seem necessary to have trouble with those men.

"It isn't the men," said Tom; "it's the children. They ain't going to be scared out of their religion and have their nice little Sunday school all broke up by them villains. I don't want to have no trouble, you understand, and I'll try to make 'em hear reason if they come; only there's no telling what may happen, and I want to have you along."

"But I'm no fighter, Tom; you can get a dozen better men to go with you."

"I don't want 'em. I'm not going there for a fight, but to teach them children. And as for fighting—I'm a man of peace myself, but I've heard you say that you liked nothing better than boxing when you were at college. But if you don't care to go——"

The pluck and easy resoluteness of the man were too much for me, and I interrupted him to say that it was all right, and I would go with him.

The next day was one of those clear, crisp, transparent October days such as only the northwest can give, with a sense of invisible frost-work in the sunshiny air; and after breakfast Tom and I set off for Pye's Corner together.

Pye's Corner was not a town—hardly even the beginning of one. There was a country store, and a blacksmith's shop, and a couple of houses at the cross-roads. There were widely separated, rudely built farmhouses scattered about, and a little schoolhouse placed as nearly as possible in the centre of the farming district.

As we came up to the schoolhouse a crowd of children

who had gathered about the door came shouting and running to meet us, and Tom hailed them with, "That's the way to do it. Fall in behind for the grand march!"

He took out his flute and led the way with a lively tune, while the children laughed and capered behind him. I brought up the rear, and entered with them through the open door. It was only when I had marched up and had taken my place on the teacher's platform beside Tom, that I noticed that we were not the only men there.

Four men were sitting on a bench at the other end of the little room. They were big, rough-looking fellows. Three of them sat close together, and the fourth man was at the end of the bench, with his right arm in a sling.

I glanced at Tom. He was as smiling and easy as usual.

He had opened a hymn-book, and was proceeding to give out a hymn, when one of the men stood up and growled out, "There ain't goin' to be no camp-meetin' here to-day, my fine feller!"

"Why not?" said Tom.

"'Cause there ain't," he answered gruffly, "and 'cause we've got ycr caged, and ycr goin' to take a lickin' for yer trick on our pardner here last Sunday!"

The other three men got up as he spoke, and Tom took in the situation at a glance.

"Just hold on a minute," he said coolly. "You don't want to hurt these young 'uns. Children," he went on, "you can go home, and mind you don't say a word about this. But come back, every one of you, next Sunday, and we'll sing double-extra hymns to make up for it."

The children filed out with scared faces. As the last child crossed the threshold, Tom Crump had his coat and vest on the floor and his shirt-sleeves rolled up, and had stepped to the edge of the platform.

"Now, you miserable cowards, come on and try it!" he shouted.

In that last minute he seemed to have changed to another man. The blue eyes glittered like steel, the nerves were

tense, and the sinews of his bare arms stood out like whipcord.

I could see that the four ruffians were taken by surprise and were hesitating; and as I had instinctively followed Tom's example, and now felt the old boxing fever in my blood, we were not so badly matched, after all.

But the hesitation was only for a moment.

"Don't let them get behind you," muttered Tom, "and don't let one of 'em clinch you, or you're gone."

The words were hardly spoken when the three who had been sitting together when we arrived came at us with a rush. There were no desks in the room, and they came jumping over the low benches, two at Tom and one at me. The narrow platform on which we stood brought us about even with their height. I warded off a terrific lunge that would have thrown me, and struck twice with my right before my assailant staggered back to recover.

Tom had knocked one of his antagonists off his feet at the first blow; and the man fell against his mate, who was rushing up behind him. Both came sprawling down together.

But they were on their feet again the next minute, filling the air with horrible words. The one whose arm was in a sling came running up, and all four made at us. We struck out hot and quick, and kept them off a moment longer; but a side blow knocked Tom off the platform, and as I sprang down to aid him I received a blow on the head that made my teeth rattle.

Then for a few minutes there was a terrific struggle. The benches were upset, and we fought and tumbled amongst them. I thought it was all up with us.

"Down the little fellow!" cried one of the men; and, leaving me to hold my own with the remaining one, the other three turned together upon Tom.

Then Tom Crump came out in his glory. He dodged the first rush with the spring of a cat, and in two jumps had reached the open space in front of the platform. As the men came at him he caught up one of the benches, held it lengthwise

above his head, and flung it with all his strength against them.

The two foremost went down under it, roaring and tumbling against the overturned benches behind them; and as Tom cried, "Now finish the business!" the other two made a break for the door, and ran as if they thought the "little fellow" was at their heels.

We had no trouble with the two who were left. But when they had sneaked off, crestfallen and cowed, the victors were in a sorry plight.

I felt bruised and sore all over, and on my head there was a lump as large as an egg. Tom's left wrist was sprained; one of his eyes was closed, and his head was cut and bleeding. I bathed his eye and made a sling for his hand and tied up his head with a handkerchief; and we were both sorry-looking objects as we started for home.

As we went down the road from the schoolhouse together, we came to the stump where Tom's practising was done. I suppose it awoke associations in his mind, for he stopped in the middle of the road, closed his remaining eye, and sang waveringly:

"As we gather home, lightly gather home!"

And as I looked at him with his head tied up, and his hand in a sling, and one eye no longer recognisable, the comicality of the whole thing overcame me, and I lay down on the ground and laughed till I cried.

He did not look much better when he appeared before the astonished children at the afternoon school in town.

"Children," he said, "we had a sort of a Sunday-school celebration up at Pye's Corner this morning, and if you don't believe we had a lively time you can ask some one that was there."

A BRUSH WITH GHOST-DANCERS.

BY G. E. L.

AT our ranch in south-eastern Montana, on the Little Powder River, we scarcely drew breath in peace for five or six weeks during the Sioux war in the fall and winter of 1890. As early as October we had an alarming experience.

We had with us some old acquaintances from the East, whom we hoped to induce to settle near us. For that reason, as well as for others, an Indian raid was particularly unpleasant.

Two young men who had been classmates of my brother Morris and myself, at the University of Michigan, had come out to see us. For three weeks we had enjoyed ourselves together, riding, hunting, and gathering wild plums in the little valleys of the range to the east of our place.

On our range, about a mile from the ranch cabin, was a "gulch" which had opened during the rains of the previous fall. And I must explain that a gulch here means something different from the ravines or hollows seen elsewhere in the country. The one to which I refer was an opening which formed suddenly, during the rains, and at first seemed to be a mere crack in the deep, clayey soil, extending back transversely from the Little Powder River up the gently inclined slope a distance of three or four hundred yards.

In many places it was not more than four feet wide, and would not have been noticed by any one riding toward it till he was within fifty yards of it, perhaps not even then; but it was eighteen or twenty feet deep. It was simply a great crevice in the ground, with sides either perpendicular or

OUT WEST.

diverging, so that in places it was wider at the bottom than at the top.

Such gulches are not uncommon along the rivers of this region. They are caused in this manner: the rain soaks down through the upper and porous strata of the soil to the harder clay beneath; and on the hard bed which it has now reached the water flows along, hollowing out a channel until the earth above sinks down and is washed out. The upper strata are composed of very fine-grained, clayey soil, and this probably accounts for the cleanly cut banks.

Such a gulch lengthens backward, so to speak, by sudden cavings in of the ground at the upper end, a considerable extent sinking down at once.

A little after the middle of October rain fell steadily for two days, and shortly after, as our cattle-man, Jesse Ryerson, was driving in our little herd of riding-ponies, a queer accident happened. The gulch extends partly across our range. Around the upper end of it ran a well-beaten track which we used in going to and from the track beyond.

In doubling the head of the gulch here, the ground broke in under the weight of the animals, carrying three of them down with it. Jesse barely pulled up in season to keep out of the chasm. Two of the horses scrambled out, but the third, unable to extricate himself, went down with the turf to a depth of twelve or fifteen feet below the surface of the prairie.

At first Jesse attempted to help the pony out, using his horse and lariat to assist its struggles. Failing in this, he climbed down into the gulch and tried to lead the animal along the bed of the gully, and so on down to the river. But he came at once to deep mud-holes, pools, and rocks, which prevented further passage.

Then he climbed out and came to the ranch to report the accident; and for a time it looked as if the horse would have to be shot, for there was no available way of hoisting him.

But it would have been a great pity to lose a fine young pony, well broken to saddle. The matter was talked over, and during the afternoon, with a view to hauling the animal

out with lines and horses, my brother and Jesse set two posts on the opposite sides of the gulch, ran a beam across from one post to the other, and made a sling to pass under the pony's body.

I say my brother Morris and Jesse did this, for I was absent with our two friends from the East, hunting antelope and black-tail deer. When we returned, at four o'clock in the afternoon, we were surprised to find no one in the cabin, and no dinner prepared. We were all very hungry, and had expected to find a meal ready for us.

I then noticed on the table a paper on which was written, "Pony in the gulch. We are trying to get him out. May have to shoot him."

The gulch was in sight from the house. We could see three horses picketed there, and also the posts and beam across the gully. Now and then we caught sight of Morris or Jesse moving about.

We decided to let them manage it without our aid, and, having turned out our own horses, busied ourselves about the cabin: I in kindling a fire and preparing food, our two friends in attempting to dress an antelope we had shot.

Before long one of our friends, Frank Stowell by name, looked into the cabin.

"There's a mounted party coming along there where Morris and Jesse are," he said. "They look to me like Indians!"

He got his glass and went out. I gave myself no trouble. Small parties of Indians occasionally passed our ranch. Often they stopped to say "How," for a moment, and sometimes we gave them food. None of them had ever appeared unfriendly.

"Those *are* Indians!" Frank came to the door to say to me a moment later. "Three of them have got off their horses; and they have guns."

"Well," said I, smiling, "did you ever see an Indian without a gun?"

A moment after, as I was cutting off steak to fry, I heard the faint report of a gun. Then I ran out.

"They're firing! They're fighting!" cried Frank, who

stood looking through the glass, while our other companion, Ned Johnson, was waiting in great excitement for a chance to look.

"Probably they've had to shoot the pony," I remarked sagely.

But I could see three or four of the redskins jumping about the beam and posts in a peculiar manner. Just then two white puffs of smoke rose, followed quickly by two reports.

I knew now that there must be trouble, and I feared the very worst. We ran first to secure all our breech-loaders. I told Frank to bring in two buckets of water from the well near by, and Ned to catch our three ponies if he could, and turn them into the horse corral, a few rods back of the cabin.

We had scarcely time to set about these hasty preparations when I saw seven or eight Indians riding toward the ranch buildings, urging their horses forward at a run; and I feared that it was all over with my brother and Jesse.

We had about two minutes for preparation. I did not close the door of the cabin, but stood back a few steps inside, ready to shoot.

There were two small windows in the front, one in each end, and one in the back of the building. I knocked out a pane of glass from each of these windows, and told Stowell and Johnson to do the best they could through the holes. This was the first time they had ever been in the West, or ever seen a skirmish of any sort; but they showed good grit.

There was now no doubt in my mind that the Indians meant mischief. About a hundred and fifty yards from the cabin were two stacks of fodder; and I said to my companions: "When they get to those stacks, let drive at them!"

I had hardly said it when the Indians were down on us. Just before they reached the stack, they all yelled like screech-owls, seeing me and expecting, no doubt, to scare me. We opened on them at about the same moment, and fired a dozen shots hot and fast.

This was not what they were looking for. They sheered off

and circled round to the rear, placing the corrals and sheds between us and them.

I suppose we were a little flustered, and as they were riding at full speed it is not very strange that we did not hit any of them. As soon as we began to shoot, they ducked beside their horses.

They were leading three horses which I recognised as our own. They had taken them from my brother and Jesse. This did not give me any encouragement as to Morris's fate.

Frank sent a ball at the Indian who was leading our horses which struck his horse. So we thought, at any rate, for the animal reared and nearly threw its rider.

Suspecting that the Indians would try to get our horses in the corral, I took a hatchet, and, climbing the ladder into the loft of the cabin, cut a small hole through the roof boards. On peeping out, I saw that one of the redskins had dismounted, and was already sneaking up to the gate.

He saw me thrust the barrel of my Winchester through the hole, and ducked behind the corral fence. But I sent two bullets through the fence so close to him that he gave a yell, and dashed out across the prairie.

As he ran, I shot at him, and if I did not hit him I hurt his feelings a good deal; for, as the balls *pinged* past him into the ground, he doubled like a rabbit, and yelled from pure fright.

My fun with this Indian was of short duration. Three or four of his companions, who had got into a bed of diamond willows and rose-bushes, near a spring, a little way off to the left, opened fire on the roof, which was covered only with inch boards. The bullets crashed through as easily as if the boards were paper. I went down with the ladder, in a hurry to get under cover of the log walls of the cabin. But as soon as the firing stopped, I climbed up again and watched them through the hole.

For some minutes they made no move. The one with the three horses rode far around to the left. We had hopes that they would leave; but four or five of them still lingered in the

willow bed. In order to stir them up I sent a few shots into it ; and again they riddled the roof, driving me below.

By this time the sun had set, and the glow in the west was slowly dying out. We could see the outline of the corral and the dark patch of bushes off to the left. I felt quite sure the miscreants were concocting mischief, but had little idea what they would really do. Their horses, we thought, were bunched out near the foot of a hill, eight hundred or a thousand yards away.

An hour passed, and as we had eaten nothing after a hard day's hunting, we took turns going down the ladder and rummaging for food.

On a sudden a bright glare from the front side shone in through the clefts in the roof. Stowell and Johnson turned around with exclamations of surprise and alarm.

We soon saw what caused the light. Some one of the Indians had come around on that side, and set fire to the two stacks of fodder. It was coarse, wild hay, and burned up fiercely.

As there was no wind, and the stacks were too far away to fire the cabin or corral, I was not alarmed. But the loss would be considerable,—there were several tons in each stack, —and I watched it ruefully, not, for a moment, thinking that it was a ruse to divert our attention.

The flames, streaming upward, alarmed the horses and they coursed, snorting, around the corral. Presently three or four shots were fired from the direction of the willow bed, and the balls went through the roof boards, so close to our heads that we all jumped down the ladder again.

I had scarcely reached the ground floor when I heard the gate of the corral swing back. Then, in an instant, I knew that a trick was being played on us, and sprang back up the ladder. Taking advantage of the diversion, one of the Sioux had crawled up and pulled the gate pin. He plainly expected that the horses would rush out of their own accord, when they could be seized and carried off.

But the gate had scarcely swung back when we heard a

revolver crack close beside the corral fence, and saw the Indian skulk off, holding both hands at his stomach. He had hardly disappeared when a man—whom at second glance I made out to be Jesse—dashed in at the illumined gateway, and before the horses had time to run out fastened the gate.

Three of the redskins advanced partly into the light and tried to get a shot at Jesse through the fence; but we opened fire on them so briskly from holes in the roof that they darted away again.

I ran down to let Jesse in and to inquire for Morris. To my great joy, both answered me as I spoke. They were keeping in the shadow of the shed, back of the cabin; and in a few moments we had them in the house.

What had occurred at the gulch was, briefly, this: Morris had seen the Indian party while they were yet half a mile away, but after a single glance paid little attention to them. Jesse was down in the gully, trying to place the sling under the pony's body. He had difficulty in doing so, and Morris presently climbed down by the line on the beam to assist him.

They were occupied for some minutes about this, when they heard the tramp of horses' feet. Then a horse neighed, and a moment after they saw an Indian look down into the gulch.

He said, "How!" and they responded. A second and a third looked down. My brother heard them speak in low tones to one another, in a way he did not quite like.

Meantime the sling was adjusted, and Morris seized the line and started to climb up, hand over hand. He had barely raised himself a few feet, when he heard a gun-hammer click. Glancing quickly upward, he saw one of the redskins taking aim at him. He let go the line, and dropped back into the gully just as the Indian's shot rang out. It missed him.

Morris had no weapon with him, but Jesse had a revolver, and he fired at the Indian. Both he and Morris then dodged around an angle of the perpendicular clay wall, and gained cover beneath the overhang.

Immediately two Indians jumped across the gully, and fired

at them from the other side. Jesse returned the fire, and then he and Morris leaped to a more sheltered nook under the bank, a little lower down, where they were out of sight from above on either side.

Jesse had but three cartridges left in his revolver. The Indians had them completely in a hole, and the only thing to do was to lie low.

After a few moments they heard a party riding away, but could not determine whether any had remained. They dared not show themselves. Probably the Indians knew our ranch very well, and were aware that, ordinarily, three men lived there. Apparently they thought they had better scoop in the horses and other property at the cabin, and formed a plan to swoop down on the house, murder me, and take everything they could carry off.

After lying low in the gulch till they heard the firing at the ranch, Morris and Jesse crept down the gully to the river, and then came along under cover of the bush fringe.

There they lay listening to the progress of the fight till the stacks were fired. Then Jesse first, and afterward my brother, crawled up to the corral in the shadow cast by the cabin.

Jesse saw the Indian who opened the gate when he first came out from the willow bed, and lay in wait for him by the fence. He was pretty sure that he hit the redskin from the manner in which he ran away.

It is probable that the Sioux made off shortly after that, for we saw nothing further of them. They had taken three of our horses and had burned about six tons of hay for us.

The next morning we hauled the pony out of the gulch. Our two visiting friends, although they had behaved very pluckily, had received a rather bad impression as to the safety of life and property in our section. They left us a week later, saying that they would wait awhile and see how we came out before casting in their lot among us.

TRACKING TIP TANNER.

BY MANLEY H. PIKE.

"**T**IP TANNER has broken jail!" So Joshua Staples shouted to us as he drove rapidly past from the village.

If you have never lived in the country you can have no idea of the alarm and uneasiness which the escape of a criminal causes among people who dwell upon isolated farms, sometimes a mile or more from the next neighbour. Each family fears for its own safety, and no one feels at ease until the fugitive has been recaptured, or is known to have quitted the vicinity.

Consequently his pursuit is everybody's business, as much as it is that of the regular officers of the law; and all do what they can to bring about his return to prison.

Leaving the older men to guard the houses, the others, arming themselves with whatever they can press into service, form search-parties and start upon the chase amid general excitement.

Tip Tanner, that worst of minor rural offenders, a horse-thief, well-known all over Sarrabec County for his numerous robberies, had been arrested and confined in the East Freedom lock-up only two days before, to the universal joy. His escape seemed like a public calamity.

So Joshua Staples's news threw us into confusion. Mother turned pale. The girls cried. Father took down the old Springfield musket which he had carried throughout the war. John rushed upstairs to get his double-barrelled shot-gun; while I, owning no firearms, felt like King Richard on Bosworth field, and would have given a kingdom, had I possessed it, for a day's use of the clumsiest gun.

"Oh, mercy me! What shall we do?" sighed mother.

"Where's the ramrod that goes with this musket?" shouted father.

"I can't find my cartridges!" howled John, from his room.

"We'll all be murdered!" sobbed Mary.

Between father's rummaging for his ramrod, John's overturning everything in his quest of ammunition, and the rushing about of the rest of the family without any especial object an uninstructed passer-by would have wondered whether it wasn't his duty to come in and try to save one or two lives, at least.

Nate Fairfield drove up just as the racket was at its loudest.

"See you've heard the news," said he, laughing. "I've got my two-seated beach-waggon outside, and if you boys will come with me, we'll maybe manage to do something."

Nate was exactly John's age, seventeen; but he affected a habit of taking everything very coolly, as if he were above and beyond the youthful weakness of becoming agitated. Yet this did not prevent him from making as many blunders as John and myself, who, father declared, were two of the most rattle-brained boys in existence.

While this opinion of father's did not dispose him to be confident of the result of our expedition he let us drive off without objection.

"Now, fellows," began Nate, as we drove along, "we'd better go the Muck Meadows way, for Sheriff Rodgers and fifteen men started down the Ten-Mile Road half an hour ago. Tanner's sure to try to get over the State line, and they're going around to head him off. But we'll travel a straight course, and we're more likely to get near him than a crowd of that size, travelling together."

"Is he on foot?" asked John.

"Yes; and he can't have stolen a horse at this time of day."

We went on several miles without seeing any one, for it was a lonely district. About noon we drew aside to water the horse at a spring in the thick woods. By this time some

of the novelty of the thing had worn off, and we began to think that we had come on a fool's errand.

"Ten to one he's taken some other road," said John.

"Nonsense!" protested Nate; "we may overhaul him in the next half-hour."

"I've just thought of something," I broke out suddenly. "Suppose we do overhaul him?"

"I've got my double-barrel," answered John proudly.

"And I've a six-chambered Colt revolver," added Nate, drawing out the weapon. "This is the sort of thing a man wants when he is chasing thieves."

"Only, when a man wants this sort of thing, he wants it loaded," exclaimed John, examining the revolver and then bursting into a shriek of laughter.

"What? Not loaded? You don't mean it!" Nate sputtered, snatching his pistol from John's hand. "How on earth did I happen to forget to load it?"

John, who had been feeling in his pockets, had stopped laughing.

"Same way I happened to forget to bring my cartridges," mumbled he, looking extremely sheepish.

"Then neither of you can fire a shot, can you?" asked I.

"Keep still, Charley," snapped John. "What do young boys know about guns?"

"They know that guns won't go off unless they're loaded; and neither will six-chambered Colt revolvers," retorted I.

"He won't guess that we can't shoot," urged Nate, who was of a hopeful state of mind. "We can take a good aim at him, and if we look ferocious enough he'll surrender, and be glad to do it."

I privately doubted my ability to look ferocious when face to face with a desperate criminal, and I fancy the others did, too; but no one said so.

"I've just thought of something else," I broke out again, after a short silence.

"Well, what is it?"

"I never ~~saw~~ Tip Tanner. Did you ever, John?"

"N—no."

"Or you, Nate?"

"What do you want to cross-question a man for, Charley? Well, no."

"Then how shall we know him if we do find him?"

"There was a dead pause. I was a little alarmed at my own success, and began to wish I had held my tongue. At last Nate said:

"We can ask people along the road if they've seen any suspicious-looking man passing. Somebody must have noticed him." I pondered over this for a moment.

"But, Nate," I resumed, "I've just thought of something else. Suppose——"

John rose up in all the majesty of an irritated elder brother.

"Charley Porter, if you don't stop your supposing and your just thinking of something else, I'll leave you right where we are, and you may walk home. There!"

I said not a word more. We resumed our way, which soon led us out of the woods and into open country again. Ahead we saw a farmhouse standing some distance back from the road.

"We'll go there and inquire," said Nate. "No, hold on; there's a man working on that stone wall. We'll ask him."

We drove up to the man, who, with coat off, was tugging hard at a large stone.

"Good day, sir," began Nate. "Could you tell a man whether you have seen anybody passing this forenoon?"

The workman straightened up and look at us. He was tall, red-haired and strongly-built, ruddy-faced and sharp-eyed.

"Not a soul," said he. "Stop, though—yes, I have. About an hour ago, when I was up at my house there, I saw a man walking along this road, same way you're going."

"What did he look like?"

"Can't say—too far off. Rather small, I should say, and walked a little lame. But what makes you want to know, boys?"

"We're chasing a prisoner who broke out of the East

Freedom lock-up this morning," said Nate. "He's probably on his way to cross the State line, and we thought he might have taken this road."

"That so? Who is it?"

"A fellow named Tanner?"

Our new acquaintance started violently.

"What? The horse-thief? Tip Tanner?"

He snatched up his coat, and jumped upon the front seat beside Nate, exclaiming:

"Drive on, boy! Smart's the word! You've time yet, if you hurry!"

Nate, bewildered, forced his horse up to a ten-mile trot.

"My name's Ezra Fletcher," explained the man, as if he had suddenly remembered that his proceedings needed explanation. "That rascal, Tip Tanner, stole my matched Hambletonians out of my stable under my very nose a year ago last Wednesday night, and I've never seen a hoof of 'em since. So you're after him, are you? Well, I'm with you, every time!"

We wanted to give three cheers. A full-grown man of Fletcher's size and strength was a valuable ally indeed. Under such circumstances even I could not suppose or think otherwise.

"Yes, he stole my horses; and now I'm going to settle with him for 'em," continued Fletcher. "I know well enough where he'll strike for—the bridge over Barker's Brook. It's the only place he can cross, but he can't get there under an hour, and at this rate we'll catch him somewhere inside of forty minutes."

"Besides, the sheriff's party may get there in time to head him off," said John. "They went around by the Ten-Mile Road."

"What time did they leave?" asked Fletcher. "Seven o'clock? They can't quite make it, I should think. We must hurry. G'long, horse!" Taking the reins, he pushed the steed along with a skill which showed that he was an excellent jockey. Nate looked uncomfortable, although he didn't protest. He wasn't accustomed to that style of driving.

"How does Tanner look now?" asked our friend abruptly.

Here was a poser. No one answered. Fortunately Ezra Fletcher didn't wait for a reply.

"About the same, I judge, as when I see him eight years ago; when he worked for my uncle, Silas Coombs. A little, dark-faced fellow, with a mean, sneaking, hang-dog look, and only one eye. Oh yes, I remember the rapsallion. And when I catch him!"

He ground his teeth, and fell silent. We didn't quite like this. The expression on his countenance was far from pleasant. I finally faltered out:

"I've just thought of something else. Suppose you do catch him?"

Fletcher, passing the reins into one hand, pulled out an immense clasp-knife from an inner pocket. Opening this with his teeth, he brandished a most wicked-looking blade over his head.

"See that, boys?" asked he, with a singularly ugly laugh. "Well, when I get hold of Tip Tanner——"

He stopped, and did not finish his sentence; but we understood only too well, and looked at one another in horror. If I was half as pale as John and Nate, I must have been a sight indeed.

"Boys," whispered John, "this is a bad business!"

"It makes a man wish he hadn't come," said Nate, shuddering.

"Suppose——" I began, but John frowned me quiet.

"We've got trouble enough on our minds now, without your supposings," he growled in my ear.

Ezra Fletcher, having caressed the razor-like edge of his clasp-knife, put it up again, much to our relief. But he continued to mutter threats which it was alarmingly evident he was precisely the sort of man to carry out when occasion offered.

The more he thought of his wrongs, the more bloodthirsty he seemed to become. We found ourselves pitying the unfortunate thief whom we had hitherto been so eager to run down.

Fletcher paid small attention to us, and we managed to talk in whispers.

"The idea of wanting to murder a man for stealing a pair of horses!"

"Yes, and it'll be our fault. We shall be the cause of it."

Yet what could we do? We didn't dare remonstrate with the revengeful farmer, and for all practical purposes we were his passengers, and not he ours. If we tried to interfere with his plans, he was capable of almost any act of violence. We had caught a Tartar, and no mistake!

Fletcher drove on without asking any more questions, save one as to the precise road the sheriff had taken. We could see that he was very anxious to overtake Tanner at the bridge before the sheriff's party came up.

This anxiety made us shiver. Sheriff Rodgers and his fifteen men would render it impossible for him to execute the deed which he had in mind.

By-and-by we came suddenly upon a level space crossed half a mile ahead by a wide brook. To the right hand appeared a cloud of dust upon a cross-road. Fletcher looked searchingly in that direction.

"The sheriff's crowd. That's good," said he. "If they don't get here too soon," he added grimly.

There was no sign of Tanner nor of any human being to be seen. We should have hoped he had escaped, had it not been for Fletcher's apparent certainty of capturing him yet.

We reached the bridge just as the sheriff's party appeared over the hill behind us. Fletcher looked at them, and then across the brook.

"All right," said he. "I know where he's hiding on the other side. Wait a moment, boys, and you will see something that will surprise you."

He got down from the waggon and stepped upon the bridge.

"This is the State line. That sheriff can't interfere with what I do over there."

Fearing each instant to hear cries of agony or to see a terrible tragedy, we scarcely dared to listen or look. The

sheriff and his fifteen men came clattering by us on their reeking horses.

"Too late, Rodgers!" shouted Fletcher, from the opposite bank.

The sheriff fairly roared with disappointment.

"I'll have you yet!" exclaimed he. "You won't get away next time, Tip Tanner!"

Tip Tanner!

"Yes, boys," laughed the late Ezra Fletcher, "I'm the very man. By-by, boys! Good-day, sheriff!"

The scoundrel, waving his hand mockingly, disappeared in the bushes.

I cannot describe the experience we had at the hands—or the tongues, rather—of the balked, tired, exasperated sheriff and his followers. I never had less reason to entertain a good opinion of myself in my life. The worst of it was that we couldn't think of a single decent excuse to offer. We might have known, of course, that a man who was peaceably mending a stone wall by the wayside must be Tanner!

Reaching home we received another broadside of ridicule, and for weeks after the whole community appeared to have no other business than to jeer and satirise us.

John went to college soon after, but the story followed him there, and to the end of the four years' course he was hardly called anything but "the detective."

Tip Tanner was never again heard of after the escape which he owed to our kind assistance.

"It's very hard on a man to be laughed at so for one mistake he has made," Nate once complained.

"Yes," said I sadly; "but I've just thought of something else. Suppose we'd stayed at home, and let father go."

But it ^{put} _{mut} use to suppose.

THE CHEYENNE BOY-BRAVES.

BY J. F. COWAN.

“WHY,” said Uncle Jack, chewing the last bit of his toothpick into a wad of fibres preparatory to shooting it into the fire.

This was always the signal to the boys that he was ready to begin to shoot buffaloes and Indians. Uncle Jack was a grizzled veteran officer of the regular army, and had seen much hard fighting on the frontier.

“Why, yes,” said he, “I do know something about what Indians are good for as fighters; and for downright human courage, without any of the sneaking, strike-you-in-the-back work in it, I think the Cheyennes stand ahead of them all.”

“But what Cheyennes? Where did it happen?” clamoured the boys, who knew well enough that there was some special instance back of the general statement of Cheyenne bravery.

“How did you little rascals know what I was thinking of?” he growled. “Well, in 1878 my command was stationed at the Wild Rose Agency. Things had been moving smoothly for a long time, but the Indians were getting fat and saucy on government rations, and that state of things couldn’t last. Every brave had a good breech-loader and a pony or more. Even the boys—wiry, saucy little rats—had their own guns and ponies, and the way they did run was a caution.

“There were two little chaps in particular who used to loaf round the post, who had the most impudent black eyes and the most stoical faces when they thought you were watching them. They were handsome little rascals, if they were dirty and lazy, and often they used to run races across the parade-

ground to amuse the officers for a stake of army cartridges. They were the most fearless, nimble little monkeys!

"Half the time you couldn't tell which part was horse or which part was rider. The way they stuck to these little ponies in every position imaginable, now on this side and now on that! They were along the neck, under the belly, heads almost dragging the ground! They dropped their hats and picked them up again at a breakneck gallop. They fired their rifles with one hand until it made you think of fourth of July in Bangor. They were sons of Lone Wing, a chief.

"I got to watching for the little imps to come and show off their tricks, and missed them when they didn't put in an appearance; for a fellow becomes so lonely out there that he hankers after any kind of a face he's used to, even if it is a dirty red face.

"You know I haven't much use for a live Indian. Somehow, living out on the frontier, one picks up a prejudice against them. Many of the young Indians who hang about the agencies, doing nothing, become thieves and vagabonds; but I couldn't help admiring these two boys.

"They stood by one another like Damon and Pythias. One day some of the men coaxed one of them into the barracks, and got him stupid drunk. That's an example of the way Indians are sometimes 'improved' at the agencies.

"Well, the other boy wouldn't budge an inch away until he took his comrade with him. He hung round him until after dark, and then managed to creep in while the men were at mess, and actually lugged the sleeping fellow out, whistled up the ponies, loaded him on like a log of wood, strapped him on with a lariat and galloped off.

"They had the blood of the old sachems in them, and I do believe would have died for each other. I got to like them as much as I possibly could like an Indian, and that would be about as hard for me as to like a rattlesnake.

"Maybe you have heard that the government is not the best provider in the world, and the Indian department is a great deal more uncertain than the paymaster or commissary

of the army. Well, one time the beef cattle were stampeded and run off by rascally Sioux, and the other rations were about a month behind time, and things got to looking pretty blue over at the agency.

"We let them have all the army goods we could spare, and Agent Pierson sent his scouts here and there to pick up what beef they could lawfully; but before they could get a supply the redskins began to grow lean.

"Some of the squaws and papooses that staggered over to the agency would hardly have made a shadow, and it is no wonder that petty depredations were committed.

"First the agent's poultry went. Then some one got into the storehouse and carried off a lot of Eastern canned goods the agent had for his own table. He declared that he would make the guilty one smart if he found him. That night, to cap the climax, a floor board was loosened from underneath, and a piece of meat the cook had ready for breakfast was taken from the agent's kitchen.

"The guard saw the thieves and fired on them, and by the flash of his gun recognised them as Panther Tail and Four Toes, the two Indian boys. I forgot to tell you about their names. Panther Tail, was the 'totem' or manitou name of the older boy, and the younger one was called Four Toes by the whites because, in some boyish adventure, he had lost the little toe from his right foot.

"When the guard came to make an examination, there was the four-toed track of one of the bare-footed thieves. Afterward we heard that the boys' mother was sick from fasting.

"The agent gave prompt orders to have the offenders brought in for punishment, but the Indian police came back with the word that they were not to be found in the 'tepee' of Lone Wing. The whole village was sullen over not getting rations, and not only refused to give information, but threatened vengeance if the boys were arrested.

"It was time to show a bold front. There were enough hungry warriors waiting for rations to destroy us all if they should go on the war-path, and every one was armed.

"Agent Pierson saw trouble ahead. He mustered all the force of Indian police and scouts he had, and called for a detail of cavalry from the post. I was ordered to take my company, and the entire force, numbering one hundred, was put under my command subject to the agent's orders.

"When we rode into the village there was not a soul in sight. We made first for Lone Wing's tepee. The old chief stalked to the entrance when the agent's messenger spoke to him. He said that his people were still friendly, but refused to tell where the boys were.

" 'Then we will search every tepee,' said the agent.

"I saw from the chief's looks and the frowns on the glowering faces showing now in the doors of the adjacent tepees, that there would be trouble if we tried to do that. Finally the chief said if we would give him an hour, he would tell where the boys were. I advised the agent to accept this. 'They cannot get away on their half-starved ponies in an hour,' I said; so it was decided to wait.

"When we went back, Lone Wing was ready to receive us.

" 'Where are the young thieves?' demanded the agent.

" 'The Great Father drives his children from their hunting-grounds to starve them, and then calls them thieves for not being willing to die like rabbits. The young braves are not here. The white chiefs will find them in the hills waiting for them.'

" 'They have left the reservation!' exclaimed the agent, his blood hot. Put spurs, captain, and overtake them! Better send some of the trailers ahead to find which way they have sneaked off.'

"I had a pretty good idea where we should find the boys, and I said, 'I don't think trailers will be needed in this case. They are not far off.'

" 'Why,' said he; 'where do you think they have gone?'

"I pointed toward the hills where two faint specks showed, and handed him my glass. He looked, and put spurs to his horse.

" 'No need to hurry,' I said; 'they are not running away.'

"And I was right. When we got near enough to make

them out clearly, there stood the two little fellows in war-paint and feathers, their ponies by their sides and their rifles in their hands.

"What do the rascals mean?" said the agent.

"But I understood it well enough.

"Their Indian blood wouldn't let them suffer imprisonment or possibly a whipping, and rather than thus be degraded in their own eyes and those of the warriors of their tribe, they had resolved to court a warrior's death alone, outside the reservation, and thus shield the rest of the tribe from sharing in the punishment.

"When we were within three hundred yards of them they mounted their ponies and brandished their rifles, and I could hear their shrill, boyish voices in defiant tones shouting the war-whoop of their tribe. Before any of us could get our breath, they leaped to their ponies' backs, and charged down towards us at a furious gallop.

"I think it was a moment or two before any of us took in the audacity of the thing—two Indian boys charging right into the ranks of one hundred armed whites; but when they got within rifle range they opened our eyes by lying flat on their ponies and shooting straight at us.

"Give the young imps a volley, captain!" excitedly directed the agent.

"I hated to do it, but there they came riding us down, and shouting like all possessed. 'Aim high; fire!' I commanded the men, for I couldn't bear to slaughter the brave little chiefs. On they rode, unhurt of course, right into our teeth!

"Open ranks!"

"They shot like wildfire through us, and were out of reach before we could halt and re-form.

"I supposed all we would have to do now would be to chase the little rascals back into the camp, and deliver them over as prisoners of war. But, bless my stars, if they didn't wheel, as soon as they could, bringing their ponies to a dead stop, and with another whoop of defiance come charging back up the hill at us.

"It was the most desperate exhibition of courage I had ever witnessed in a human being, red or white—a cool and grim determination to keep up the fight until they died fighting.

"Pop! One of our horses was hit.

"Pop! A cavalry man dropped his Winchester, hit in the arm. I dared not spare them any longer.

"'Fire!'

"The smoke of our second volley cleared away to show us two prostrate forms, and a pony kicking its last on the earth. I shut my eyes. I did not want to see what I knew I must see.

"'Leave them to the coyotes!' growled the agent. 'No, drag their bodies back to the old wolf's den. I'll teach them a lesson!'

"Not by my orders, Mr. Agent,' I said. 'I never faced any braver enemies. They shall be buried with the honours of war.'

"Oh, I'm so glad you were in command, Uncle Jack," little Ted cried, his lips quivering with sympathy. "Where did you bury them then, Uncle Jack? Not where the wolves could——"

"Bless your life, youngster; I didn't bury them at all. The agent and his Indian police had gone back by the time the sergeant with his squad got the graves dug; and when they went to pick them up from beside their dead ponies, I'll be court-martialled if they didn't find two of the most lively corpses that ever played possum. The men had fired low.

"Before long they disappeared from that agency. Their education had not been of the sort to make them peaceable and industrious. Very likely they have been fighting Uncle Sam since. But I couldn't hurt a hair of them."

IN THE CAVE.

BY MARTHA MCCULLOCH WILLIAMS.

“**B**UT I reckon you didn’t know we had a king and queen here in Tennessee. How do they compare with those you’ve been telling me about—those you saw across the water?”

John Harding asked it of his travelled cousin Elbert Penlan. The two lads were of an age, each just turned fifteen, and each a type of his class. John, rosy, freckled, sturdy, had never been fifty miles from his birthplace, yet had plenty of shrewd intelligence. Elbert, taller, slender, well-dressed, had been half the world over with his invalid father in search for health, and now, travel over for the present, Elbert had come to spend two years with his country kinsfolk before going to college.

He had been but a week at the Harding homestead. This was the first time he had gone outside the big plantation’s bounds. John had planned it all; they would ride, take their guns and their dinner, go to the river, wade, swim, fish, row, as pleased them. So far all was well; they had galloped the five miles at break-neck speed, tethered their horses in the shade, found the canoe, and were floating down stream in deliciously lazy fashion.

As John spoke, he stopped the boat by catching hold of an overhanging bough. They were hugging one bank. Looking over to the other, Bert saw a big grey limestone bluff, perhaps three-quarters of a mile long, seamed and crannied, broken here and there into projecting points of rock, with scattered trees clinging desperately to the face of it, and vines trailing a veil of verdure over ledges aflaut with tall maidenhair-fern.

Midway of it, twenty feet above the water-line, the rock stretch'd a smooth grey seam, whereon nature had painted, using pencils of light, and water pigments of metalliferous earth, titanic figures of a crowned king, with his queen bowing meekly before him despite the six maids of honour at her back. "Certainly those are the biggest royalties I ever saw," Bert said, laughing. "Is there no story about them? There ought to be."

"Oh yes! The Indians came here every fall to worship them—the Creeks and Choctaws, you know. They lived farther south, and hunted here in the summer-time. One time they fought here, and those that got the worst of it climbed the bluff there to the big cave, and the others watched here until they starved them."

"How did they get up? A goat can't climb that rock."

"They made pole ladders. Cut off the limbs of a tall slim sapling just so they could step on the stubs, set it up by the bluff, and when the last man was up, pushed it down again. If the others tried to follow them, they could kill them as fast as they got to the top."

"So that is the legend of King and Queen Bluff. Were you ever in the cave?"

"No; nobody goes there now but the goats. Look! There is one now in the mouth, behind those vines. It's a kid. Wish we could catch it; they are such pretty little things."

"Who owns the goats?"

"Nobody; they run wild. Just before the war, folks about here got in the notion to raise Cashmere goats; but pretty soon the creatures learned to climb the tallest fences and go where they pleased. Then they were so troublesome that they tried to get rid of them—shot at them, ran them with dogs; and what got away have lived up here on the bluff ever since."

"Wish we could get up to their cave."

"We can try. See that tall hickory over there? The top of it comes level with the mouth. I'll climb it, and see what our chance is to get in."

Ten minutes later John called from the treetop, "We can do it, Bert, if we can find a sound plank down there in the drift."

"What for?" asked Bert.

"I'll show you," said John, scrambling down.

A plank was easily found, likewise a long limber grapevine, by help of which it was hoisted to the treetop, and laid from a crotch in it across to the ledge in front of the cave. After that the passage was ridiculously easy.

Once Bert was safe over it, John forced him to sit down in the cavern's shadow, while he himself, as became a host, climbed down again, and by help of his invaluable vine hoisted the dinner, their coats, guns, and cartridge belts, as well as a lot of dry wood for torches. All these Bert received and laid carefully in place, keeping the while a wary eye upon the small white silky creature that had run at their approach far back into the cave.

A cave of enchantment it was to the two lads overhead. The sun beat down in white blinding heat, yet here in its mouth they were deliciously cool in the tempered breath blowing from its rocky heart. The space was much larger than they had thought—a fair-sized chamber, indeed, once you were inside its curtaining vines.

"I wonder how far it runs?" Bert said, looking to the dark passage leading further into the bluff.

John said confidently, "We'll find out before long. If it is farther than we can venture to-day, we'll come back with lanterns and explore it thoroughly."

"John walked to the back of the cave, and called excitedly, "Look! I thought I heard water; here's a spring, and somebody's been drinking out of it."

"The goats, I guess. Don't scare my kid away," Bert answered, not stirring from his seat.

"I reckon even Cashmere goats don't drink out of gourds," John said, holding to view a crooked-handled one he had found hanging beside the spring.

Bert laughed. "Maybe the Indians left it."

"No, sir-ree. It's a new gourd, and never got here without hats. I wonder if——"

"What?"

"Oh, nothing. Let's eat dinner. Afterward—well, if anything happens, we've got our guns."

"Are the goats so dangerous?" Bert asked, in mock terror.

"No," said John; "but other things may be. Let's eat our dinner, then we'll go and find out—maybe a heap of things."

Both were too much excited to eat. John got up first, pulled down a slender vine, and with it bound some of his dry sticks into a torch. When it was well alight he said: "Now I'm ready. Get your gun, Bert, loaded. I hope we won't need it—but——"

Bert followed him into the darkness—the dim, uncanny darkness of a winding passage. The kid fled before them, running with mincing leaps like a little ghost over the crackling rocky floor.

"That little fellow knows the way," said Bert.

"No doubt of it. Here is where the goats get their salt, the little salt spring's inside," John answered. "We are in their regular runway; it's just a goat wide. Our feet are too big for it, that's why it crackles so."

The passageway dropped deeper, widened, heightened, till the torchlight lost itself in the wide darkness and failed to show roof or wall. Here and there long pendent stalactites gleamed points of pearl in the glimmering dusk. Other points sprang up from the floor within, rounded into a hundred fantastic curves—so fantastic, indeed, that the gazing eye might make of them altar or column or niche or vase or prostrate figure or crouching beast.

The two lads moved among them fairly spellbound. Each step, each flare of the torch, showed something new. They came presently to a wall, and, following it, found themselves passing under a wide arch into a passage running rectangularly to the hall they quitted. A minute brought them to its end and a most surprising sight.

The smoky glimmer of a rude iron lamp lit up an oval chamber, perhaps twenty feet at its largest diameter. The vaulted roof went up, up, till the eye lost its line, and saw only a faint veiled light sifting down its rock ribs. Evidently the place opened into upper air,—that, perhaps, explained the use now made of it. Quite in its middle a small forge had been set up, in which a charcoal fire still glared dusk red. Under the lamp, which was fixed in a convenient crevice of rock, a rough plank, upheld by two loose stones, was strewn with moulds, dies, files, a pair of pliers, beside sundry bottles of liquid, and various odd-looking ingots of metal.

A pile of blankets in one corner, garments here and there upon the rocks, a whisky-jug and supply of food in a cupboardy niche, told of present human occupation, though nobody was in sight. For a breath's space the explorers looked about them, too much astounded for speech. Then Bert said, under his breath, "Do you know what this means?"

John shook his head. Bert took up a closed mould and opened it cautiously. Something round and shining fell out and rolled upon the rocks at their feet. John caught it, but dropped it instantly, crying out, "It's hot!"

Bert spun it with his foot and said, very low, "It's a new counterfeit dollar. Let's get out of this."

"These people are counterfeiters, then?"

"Not a doubt of it. Why, look at the torch, the flame is almost at your hand!"

John flung it down, saying, "We'll have to take their lamp."

"There'll be two words to that bargain, my young friend," said a voice behind them. Turning, they saw a stout, beetle-browed fellow coming in through the passage, a bucket of fresh spring water in either hand. Quick as thought he dashed their contents over the blazing faggot on the floor and the coals of the forge, sprang past the two lads and struck down the lamp, leaving the chamber all dark save for the faint ray struggling in at the top, a mere thread of light, barely

enough to make the blackness around it visible. Through the dark the man's voice came tauntingly, "I leave you, young gentlemen, to make your way home. I could kill you—nothing easier; you deserve it for your intrusion—but I prefer to let my good friend the cave take care of you. For your comfort I will tell you that it has ten miles of passages, besides pits that are as good as bottomless, where dead men cannot possibly tell tales."

"Thank you," Bert said ironically. "I advise you to find one of the deepest, or we will certainly come back and take you to upper earth."

Only a mocking laugh and the noise of retreating footsteps answered him. The chamber had evidently another outlet. As the footsteps died away, John said anxiously, "Have you got the matches, Bert?"

Bert's hand went to his vest pocket, then fell helplessly at his side. "I—have—lost them," he said slowly.

"What shall we do, John?"

"What is that?" John cried out, as a faint serpentine flicker played along the floor.

"Lightning, I think," said Bert, looking up at the round of light over his head. "There is probably a thunder-storm outside."

"Wish we were there to see it. We must get out of this. Fire off a barrel of your gun; maybe by the flash of it I can find the entrance."

So said, so done. Before the echo had died away John was calling joyfully, "This way, Bert. I've found it." Next minute the two were painfully groping their way through the passage that had led them to this danger. Soon the freer rush of air told them they had reached the hall.

"Here's where real danger begins," Bert said, wiping his damp forehead and drawing a long breath. "We know we came in along here, but have not the faintest idea through which of its passages. If we do not strike the right one, we are hopelessly lost."

"Let me hunt for the goat-path," John said, dropping to

his hands and knees. "If once we find that, we can follow it back to daylight."

Through minutes that seemed hours he kept groping around and through the encumbered floor. At last he got up, calling sorrowfully, "I'm afraid I can't find it, Bert, though I've been, it seems to me, over all of it."

"I'll fire again," said Bert.

Again the gun-fire rang echoing under the rock roof. John cried out ecstatically, "But I do see something. The kid was lying down, and the shot scared him; run quick, we must follow him, if we get out of this alive."

Guided by the patter of tiny hoofs, the two ran rapidly, heedless of falls or bruises, and in a little while saw the welcome glimmer of daylight broadening along their way. They sank panting and breathless in the cave's mouth, and looked about them, to find that though in upper air new perils menaced them.

A sudden sharp storm was swirling down the river valley. It had caught the young trees in a giant's grasp, wrenching, tossing them hither and yon, bowing their pliant length quite half-way to earth. The rocking hickory up which they had climbed stood with its top cleft in twain, and hanging helpless ten feet below the cave's level.

"Well, this is a fine come-off," John said, peering over the edge.

"There must be some way to go up and down the bluff. The goats pass over it; why not we?" Bert said, carefully scanning the projecting ledge in front of the cave in search of a possible track.

His heart sank when he saw only a trail so precipitous as to be utterly impassable to human feet. The goats even must be shy of risking it; it was not half so well-defined as the path through the cave.

That younglings such as the small creature they had followed ever got safe over it was almost beyond belief. How pretty it was—for all the world like a mat of floss silk—with four cunning feet and a pair of the softest black eyes! If

ever they got safe home both boys were ready to vow protection and sustenance to the creature and all its kind.

John looked about him a little disconsolately, saying: "I'm afraid we'll have to camp here, Bert. We've got water, and some little to eat—enough for supper, at least. When we don't come home father will certainly look for us; or maybe we'll see some one passing on the river, and fire a gun to let him know we are here. If those fellows," nodding toward the cave, "come out, we've got daylight and two good guns to take care of them. I'm sorry for leading you into such a hole the very first time we came out together."

"I've been thinking *I* led *you*, and wondering if your mother would ever forgive me for it," Bert said, smiling; adding, as he flung himself down in a niche of the rock that projected shelfwise about five feet above the floor of the cave, "I like adventures, and would not have missed to-day for anything."

"Still, I wish we were out of this, and could get home in time to save our mothers from being uneasy about us," John said, scrambling up to Bert's elbow.

They had already bestowed guns, ammunition, and what remained of their provisions on the rocky shelf behind. Through the lacy curtains of vines they could see the billowy treetops of the opposite bank, the wide green corn-fields beyond; across them upland swells crisscrossed with crook-rail fences, dotted here and there with farmhouses or low, whitewashed cabins. All the foreground lay in shadow. Notwithstanding their plight, both lads grew so rapt in contemplation of it that a rushing, scurrying noise in the cave made them start.

With loudly beating hearts they waited, hardly breathing. The sound came near and nearer. It must be the desperadoes, who, discovering their escape from the perils of darkness, had come out to make an end of them. Crouched in their rocky recess, the boys laid their guns upon its edge, and trained the muzzles full on the space of blackness within which the foe must appear.

"We won't shoot unless they attack us," John said, under his breath. Bert said nothing, but his eye had a dangerous glitter. Still the sound came on. Something dashed to the centre of the cave. Next breath both lads laughed loud and long. For goats great and small filled the space before them—goats which had come out of the cave without going into it this way. John sprang up, crying out, "Bert, we'll get home, after all. There must be another mouth out somewhere on the hillside. We'll drive them back the way they came. Hurrah, you old rascals! I never thought I'd be so glad to follow your grey beards."

"If we only had a light," began Bert.

John stopped him. "We will have one. You left the matches instead of losing them. I shall wedge our tin cup tight on the end of this pole, put in my twisted handkerchief for a wick, and all the fat meat we did not eat for oil. We'll leave everything else but the guns. Come ahead, now. Sh-pp! Sh-pp! Sh-pp! you horned varmints! I'm in a hurry to be on top of ground."

"It seems some of them are not," Bert said, eyeing three big long-horned creatures, evidently the patriarchs of the flock, who, when the others ran backward at sight of the two lads, remained behind, facing the strangers with heads menacingly lowered.

"Plague take them, I believe they mean to fight," John said. "Take care, Bert. They could butt either one of us over the edge, and not half try. We don't want to shoot them, because the rest are gone. These must show us the way out."

"Yes," said Bert. "We must scare, not hurt, them. Light your lamp; I have thought of a way to do it."

John did as he was bid, and watched with eager eyes while Bert held the edge of his straw hat in the flame. When it was well afire he sent it spinning through the air to fall hissing and sputtering in front of the long-bearded old guard.

Veterans that they were, it was too much for their courage. In a flash they were twinkling down the dark passageway.

Bert and John, following at their best speed, heard the swift hoot, cross the great hall of stalagmites then turn into a wide and winding way that ran on and on till it brought them to where were boughs drooping over a sharp wooded hillside, with a sunset world smiling fresh and wet through their leaves.

"Why, I know this place well--the big sink-hole! I've hunted all around it heaps of times," John said, as they came once more to firm upper earth.

"I'm mighty glad you do. Which way are the horses?" Bert asked, sinking down almost breathless on the fresh damp grass.

* * * * *

When the boys got home with their tale of adventure, be sure there was a fine how-d'ye-do over it. Three days later they went back to the cave. This time the sheriff was with them, and twenty more stout fellows with torches, ropes, and guns. They found easily all that the boys had seen, save indeed the counterfeiter, who doubtless vanished as soon as he found his hiding-place discovered. He was, it was strongly suspected, a noted criminal, with a large price upon his head. Notwithstanding, Bert said to John, "I'm glad they didn't catch him."

John nodded. "So am I. I tell you, Bert, we know how it feels to be in prison with little hope of ever getting out again."

THROUGH THE CONEWAGO FALLS.

BY WILLIAM MURRAY GRAYDON.

“**W**HAT a royal appetite a fishing-trip gives a fellow !” said Tip Harker. “There goes the last bite of my fifth sandwich. I can’t stand another, though. I’m too full. What shall we do next—~~hunt~~ ~~arrow~~-heads or take a look at the lines?”

“It’s too soon to overhaul the lines,” replied his companion, Maurice Brant, “and I don’t care about tramping along the shore in this scorching sun. For my part, I’d rather lie here in the shade awhile.”

“Lazybones !” exclaimed Tip, in a tone of good-humoured scorn. “But for once I agree with you. It’s just the afternoon for a nap. Let’s take forty winks apiece.”

Tip and Maurice were sturdy, sun-bronzed lads of seventeen. Early that morning they had pulled two miles down the Susquehanna from their home at Buck’s Lock, bent on a day’s outing and provided with lines and bait. Now, after a keen attack on their lunch-basket, they lay idly under a clump of bushes on the lower point of Duffy’s Island. Their boat was dragged partly out on the sandy beach. Tied to the stern by a short painter was their floating fish-box, which held almost a dozen fine bass.

Nearly a mile down the broad stretch of river a line of tumbling waves, reaching half-way across from the eastern shore, sparkled and flashed in the sunlight. This silvery line marked the commencement of the famous Conewago Falls. The boys could hear the sullen roar of the water very plainly. It sounded like the rumble of a distant freight-train.

It is a well-known fact that no more dangerous spot can be found along the entire course of the Susquehanna. Raftsmen dread it, though during the spring floods there is always a tolerably safe and well-defined rafting passage. Venturesome boys and over-confident men have frequently been drowned there. In summer-time, when the channel is thickly studded with gaunt rocks, no boat can pass safely through the falls, nor has one ever been known to do so. The rapids are nearly half a mile long, and in that comparatively short distance there is a drop of twenty-five feet. Only half the width of the river is taken up by the falls. Across the other half extends the dam that furnishes water-power to the York Haven paper-mills, some distance below. The broad flat crib of the dam juts into the upper corner of the falls. Immediately below it a narrow island covered with rocks and undergrowth stretches down the centre of the river, bounding and keeping parallel with the drop of angry waves.

Tip and Maurice knew all about the falls, and though long familiarity with the spot had not exactly bred contempt for it, they thought nothing of venturing close to the edge in their trusty boat. That very morning they had placed two out-lines in the deep water that lay just this side of the danger line; for here the largest bass and salmon were to be had.

The forty winks that the boys purposed taking grew to a whole hour. Maurice woke first, and, observing that the sun was not shining, he walked to the point of the island and looked up stream. Off in the west a mass of pearl-grey clouds were gathering, and slowly mounting higher. There was nothing alarming about this, but the afternoon was sultry and breezeless, and Maurice knew by experience in what short time a thunder-gust can collect its forces. He returned to the bushes and wakened Tip.

"It looks as though we might have a storm after a while," he said. "Anyway, we'd better go down and lift our lines."

"Oh, bother your storm!" muttered Tip. "Is that all you wakened me for? I was having such a jolly dream. I

thought I was trolling for salmon, and got a tremendous strike. Now I don't know what I hooked."

"You can finish your dream later," replied Maurice, laughing. "Seriously, Tip, there's danger of a storm."

"I don't believe a word of it. Why, there comes the sun out as bright as ever."

Nevertheless Tip arose, stretched himself, and good-naturedly followed his companion into the boat. Maurice took the oars, and pulled so swiftly down stream that the fish-box fairly stood out of water. When within forty yards of the falls he slackened speed and swung the boat around so that Tip could catch the buoy floating over the first line. The roar of the falls was deafening, and it was no pleasant sight to look down the slope of foaming waves and rocks. But the current continued sluggish for some distance, and the boys would not have feared to venture still nearer. They ran the first line, taking off three bass and a salmon. They lifted it into the boat, anchors and all, and then took hold of the second, which lay a little to one side, and was stretched directly above the mouth of the raft passage.

"We've got some big fellows this time," exclaimed Tip.

"I can feel them jerking."

"So can I," replied Maurice. "Look at that one splashing. He's a three-pounder, I'll wager."

The next minute the big fish was safe in the boat. Another one speedily followed. Tip sat on the bow seat, pulling the boat along the line from link to link. Each fish as soon as it was taken off was transferred by Maurice to the floating box.

Three-quarters of the line yielded seven bass and salmon. The end was now in sight, and the few remaining links held one good-sized fish. It struggled hard to escape as the boat slowly approached.

Carried away by excitement, the boys had failed to observe the inky-black clouds that already concealed the sun and most of the sky. The ominous mutterings of thunder were drowned by the ceaseless roar of the falls. Just as Tip reached for the link that held the fish a puff of wind whipped

the smooth deep water into fretful wrinkles. This gave the boys the first intimation of their danger. They looked up to see the sullen black clouds and the misty sheets of rain that dimmed the western horizon and were driving swiftly down the river. Forked lightning was playing along the purple crest of the Kittatinny Ridge. Up on Duffy's Island the bushy treetops bowed and quivered before the force of the gale.

"We're in for it," shouted Maurice, springing to the oars. "Don't stop to fool with the line. Let it go."

Tip instantly obeyed. The line slipped off the bow of the boat and vanished. "We're just above the worst part of the falls," he cried hoarsely. "Pull straight up, and do your best. Stepping past his companion, he dropped down on the stern seat.

Maurice did not reply. He set his teeth grimly and pulled a mighty stroke; another and another. The boat moved perceptibly up stream, cleaving the short, choppy waves. Then, swift as a hurricane, came the full force of the gale. It lashed the water into angry, white-capped billows, amid which the boat pitched and careened dizzily.

With long, muscular strokes Maurice bent to the oars. A minute went by, and his face suddenly paled. "Tip, we're losing ground!" he cried. "I'm doing my level best, but this awful wind is driving us straight on the falls."

"I know it," groaned Tip. "Pull to one side; it's our last chance." He shuddered as he looked behind him at the dizzy slope of rapids, now frightfully near.

Maurice jerked hard on the right oar, and swung the boat's head diagonally up stream.

"The fish-box is dragging us back," he shouted. "Cut it loose."

Tip drew a knife from his pocket and severed the rope. He watched the box regretfully as the waves bore it off to the edge of the falls. Such a choice lot of fish were not to be had every day. An idea occurred to him, and, cutting the anchor stones loose from the out-line, he flung them overboard.

Relieved of these encumbrances, the boat actually moved a foot or two up stream. Tip breathed easier, and a smile of triumph hovered on Maurice's lips. The danger which had been so imminent but a moment before now seemed over.

Suddenly a fierce spurt of wind swung the boat broadside to the waves. Maurice dropped the right oar, and with both hands jerked savagely at the left. He put too much strength into the effort. A sharp crack was heard as the oar split just above the blade. One half flew out of the rowlock. The other part was whirled off on the waves.

It all happened in less time than it takes to tell. The boat swung straight toward the falls, and the boys looked at each other in speechless horror. Down came the rain in drenching torrents, and the wind at once subsided a little. But nothing could save the boat now. It lunged swiftly on to destruction.

Tip snatched a long iron-pointed pole that was under the seats and tried to get a hold on the bottom of the river. His efforts were vain. The depth was too great and the current too strong.

"Drop that!" cried Maurice. "Hold to the gunwales for your life!" He jerked off his shoes and coat, and Tip had presence of mind enough to follow his companion's example.

The boat was now within a dozen feet of the falls, and fortunately its head was down stream. One swift dive, and it shot over the verge, tumbling porpoise-like from wave to wave. What followed was almost a blank to the boys. The stupendous roar of the raging waters drowned their cries. Jets of foamy spray splashed up to right and left and ahead, hiding everything in a mist. From the black clouds above came the drenching rain. It was a terrible and awful moment, and the worst was yet to come. With a thumping and crashing that threatened to rend its timbers apart, the boat struck the submerged rocks. Then, caught by a jagged boulder, it capsized in the twinkling of an eye, and went whirling over and over down the rapids.

Maurice had a brief glimpse of Tip's agonised face. Then he went far under water, and though he struggled desperately with hands and feet, he feared he would never come to the top again. But just when he could hold his breath no longer his head shot above the surface. There was brief time to fill his lungs with air, for the waves tossed him about like an eggshell, and the pelting spray blinded him. Once more he was sucked under, and when he next came to the top his hands touched something hard. He clung to it desperately, and after a dizzy rush that may have lasted half a minute he found himself floating in a comparatively quiet eddy, and was able to look about him. It was the boat that had saved him. His hands were tightly clasped over the bow. His first thought was for Tip, and he looked up and down the mad stretch of rapids. All in vain! No trace of his luckless companion was visible.

The knowledge that Tip was lost made Maurice indifferent to his own safety. But this reckless feeling lasted only an instant. Life was sweet, after all, and when he saw that the boat was moving swiftly to the lower verge of the eddy, where lay the most dangerous portion of the rapids, he determined to save himself. Letting go of the boat, he swam to a flat rock that rose out of the water on the island side of the eddy. He reached it safely, and sat there a moment to recover breath. Thirty feet distant, and diagonally down stream from him, was the outer edge of a long reef of rocks. The channel lying between ran like a mill-race, and was broken here and there into leaping waves by submerged rocks. But Maurice was a good swimmer, and did not hesitate to make the venture; moreover, his very life depended on it. Plunging from the rock, he swam with lusty strokes straight across the channel. The current bore him rapidly down, and he made a narrow escape from hitting the submerged rocks. It was by a still closer shave that he gained the reef. His finger-tips clutched the edge, and for a moment the fierce current threatened to break his frail hold. Then he got a firmer grasp with one hand, and dragged himself to a place of safety.

The worst was now over, for the reef stretched clear to the island, broken here and there by narrow gaps. Maurice lay still for a little while, resting his aching limbs and panting hard for breath. At length he rose to his feet, and as he glanced out on the water a sharp cry burst from his lips. He saw something clinging to a rock that lay in the very midst of the falls and about half-way to the upper end. That something was Tip—not a doubt of it. He must have caught the rock when the boat capsized. His face was turned up stream, and occasionally his arms stirred feebly.

In frantic haste Maurice tore across the reef, wading some of the gaps and jumping others. The last impediment was a foaming channel a dozen feet wide. Again and again the current swept him off his feet, but he persevered doggedly, and at last gained the island. He dashed up the rocky shore to another reef forty yards above, and made his way to the other edge, swimming and wading from stone to stone. He was now directly opposite the rock to which Tip was clinging, but the interlying channel was thirty or forty feet wide, and was utterly impassable. It was one of the worst spots in the whole length of the falls.

Making a trumpet of his hands, Maurice shouted lustily. Above the roar of the waters Tip heard, and turned his white, agonised face to one side. He was submerged to his breast, and the rock about which his arms were wrapped was very smooth and slippery. It was evidently a severe tax on his strength to keep hold.

"Help! help!" he cried. "I can't stand this long."

"Let go and swim across channel to one of the eddies, like I did," answered Maurice. "I'll come out on the rocks and help you to shore."

Tip shook his head. "I can't swim a stroke," he shouted back. "My knee feels as though it was broken."

He struggled to climb higher up on the rock, but the effort was futile. He was too weak and exhausted to get a fresh hold, and unless aid speedily reached him he would be swept into the raging falls and drowned.

Maurice was almost beside himself with pity and despair. Could he do nothing? Must he stand idly by and see his companion lost? He groaned and wrung his hands. If he could only swim that raging channel!

Suddenly, as he glanced up and down the river through the driving rain, an idea flashed into his mind. It was a slim and desperate one, but he would have risked his life ten times over on a chance of saving his companion.

"Hold fast, Tip," he shouted with all his might. "Hold fast to the rock for your life. I'm coming to rescue you. Be ready to swim, if it's only a couple of strokes."

"I'll do my best," Tip answered. "Hurry up, though."

Maurice waved his hand, and hurried back to the island over rocks and through raging channels. His breath was nearly spent when he reached the upper point, and scrambled from thence on to the crib of the dam. He glanced quickly up the river and toward both shores. No chance of aid there. Not a boat was in sight. He must depend on his own efforts.

He looked down into the falls and saw that Tip was still clinging to the rock. Then he ran to the outer end of the crib and hunted for a loose plank that he had noticed on a previous visit. He found it, and lifted it up. It was well suited to his purpose, being about ten feet long by two in width.

Lightning still flashed across the sky and the rain was falling heavily. But there was no longer any wind, and the water above the falls was smooth and sluggish—a very fortunate thing for Maurice's plan. He did not pause to think of the slight chances of success or of the terrible risk that he was about to run. At all hazards he must save Tip.

The crib, as has been said, jutted out toward the commencement of the falls and at a short distance above them. Maurice lowered himself and the plank to the base of the crib, where there was barely standing-room on a narrow rock. He straddled the one end of the plank, his weight throwing the other end slightly out of water. Then with hands and feet he paddled up stream like a frog, swung the plank around,

and headed it straight down stream in a line with Tip's head, which he could dimly see through the waves. What he planned to do was to steer the plank alongside the rock and catch hold of Tip as he shot by. Then he hoped to get into one of the side eddies, and from there gain the island.

But the instant the plank took the dizzy plunge over the verge of the falls Maurice found that he was utterly unable to control it. The waves pounded him from all sides, and threw him into a panic of fear and confusion. He was so low down in the water that he could see nothing. He dashed blindly on, holding tight to his frail support, and expecting every moment to be pitched off.

That he did not come to grief on the sunken ledges during the first twenty-yard dash down the rapids was little short of miraculous. But in spite of the danger to life and limb, his uppermost thought was of Tip. Would he pass close enough to the rock to save him, and, in that event, would they succeed in reaching one of the eddies?

As these questions flashed through Maurice's mind, the plank rose suddenly to the crest of a high wave, and he caught a brief glimpse of the rock, with Tip still clinging to it, a short distance ahead and to the left. He shouted with all his might, and just then a second glimpse showed him that the rock was empty. Down went the plank again, and the dashing waves cut off the view. As he shot swiftly on, a bobbing head rose just beside him, and, reaching out one hand impulsively, he caught Tip's arm. How he got his companion on to the plank Maurice never knew; but in some way it was accomplished. Side by side the two lads were swept on through the raging waters. Any attempt at steering was out of the question. It kept them busy to get their breath between the blinding showers of spray that pelted them in the face, and to keep hold of the plank as it twisted from side to side.

That ride seemed interminably long, though it was really very brief. Midway down the falls the plank struck a rock, and whirled clear around. It hovered for an instant in a patch of quiet water. A little to one side the rapids were

more shallow, and bare ledges cropped out thickly. Maurice saw his chance, and, bidding Tip take a firm hold on his shoulder, he swam with him across the stretch of deep and turbulent water, and safely gained the outermost reef. From here they pushed on to the island, and after a severe struggle, during which they had to swim more than once, they reached the lower point. Both were thoroughly exhausted, and Tip's knee proved to be severely bruised.

The storm was now over, and after resting awhile Maurice helped his companion up the island and across the crib of the dam to shore. Here they borrowed a boat, and pulled slowly homeward.

The story of their perilous adventure spread through the neighbourhood, and Maurice found himself quite a hero—especially in Tip's estimation. It was a pretty costly experience for the boys in more ways than one, since they had lost their coats, shoes, fishing-tackle, fish-box, and boat. The next day they found the boat, bottom up, on a grass bar half a mile below the falls, but it was so badly battered by the rocks that they did not think it worth the trouble of repairing.

They had a new boat before the summer was over, but in future they will give the Conewago Falls a wide berth.

THE "BUMPER JUMPERS."

BY H. G. FOLTS.

SID was digging potatoes, on a stint, when another boy came to the fence and called out,—

"Say! the 'Bumper Jumpers' are goin' to catch a ride up to the summit on the coal-train. Karl Johnson's got a hamper full o' lunch, and we're going to stay all day and go nutting over in the Shelby Grove. The frost last night must 'a' laid the shucks wide open, and we won't find another such day this fall."

"Well, I can't go," said Sid decidedly, "for I've promised to get these early potatoes out to-day, and I'm going to do it."

"I tell you what, Sid. You come on, and we'll all come down on the three o'clock trip and turn in and help you. We can get them out in a jiffy."

Sid was easily persuaded, and, hastily gathering up the potatoes he had already dug, he shouldered his hoe. With a basket of potatoes swinging between them, the two friends hastened across the field and scrambled over the low fence in the rear of the cottage that was Sid's home.

As Sid disappeared down the cellar stairs his companion shouted after him,—

"Hurry, Sid! The coal-train is just blowing for the crossing."

A line of railway had recently been built through Sadbrooke village. From there eastward for fifteen miles there was a steep grade, up which freight-trains went very slowly. So the Sadbrooke boys had formed a habit of jumping upon these trains while in motion, and riding on the "bumpers" up to

the summit. Thence they returned on the local freight which stopped at Sadbroke.

In these stolen rides the boys were rather encouraged than discouraged by the crews of freight-trains, to whom the youngsters often brought presents of apples and nuts.

The practice had led to the organisation, among a certain set of small boys, of a club, who called themselves "The Bumper Jumpers." Of this society Sid Asher had been an active and daring member until his mother had forbidden him to risk life and limb in such a foolish pursuit of pleasure. Sid was her only child, and she was a widow.

But the bright beauty of this autumn morning made Sid a victim to temptation. Perhaps the fact that his mother was absent on a day's visit had its weight in deciding him.

At any rate, when the whistle sounded Sid hastily scrawled on a piece of paper, "I'm going nutting," left it where his mother would see it if she chanced to return early, seized an empty flour sack, and was off to join his chums. He found them seated in a coal "jimmy."

Soon the train started, and away they went.

At the summit—a wide plateau covered with hickory-trees—the boys easily jumped off before the cars had gathered much headway. Then they started off pell-mell over the withered autumn fields for the hickory grove.

Before luncheon-time the boys had filled their sacks with nuts, and before the afternoon was gone they had so many that they could scarcely carry all to the tank where the down trains stopped on the summit for water; but there they succeeded in catching the five o'clock local freight which should stop at Sadbroke. As they had a bag of nuts for the crew, they were allowed to ride on the "caboose," or conductor's car.

As the train was detained at the tank some time, the boys began to play about the cars. When the bell rang to warn all aboard, Sid found himself much nearer the engine than the caboose, and beside a freight-car which had projecting ends—that is, one on which the platform extended some eighteen

inches farther than the sides of the car, forming a sort of shelf upon which one could sit.

The idea entered Sid's head to climb up on this car, and hide himself until such time as his companions might miss him and come in search of him. Accordingly, he climbed up on the drawheads, and seated himself on the platform. Away went the train.

From the tank-house to the beginning of the grade there was a distance of about a mile of level track over which the train, already behind time, went rumbling along at a good rate of speed. Sid sat with his face toward the engine. There were some cars between it and him, and some more behind him.

Sid began to wonder whether his companions had missed him or not. It was queer that they had not come over the cars to look for him. Perhaps they expected to "get the joke on him" by leaving him there till he was tired, and then laughing at him for seeking them. Well, he wouldn't do that.

He watched the couplings jam and rattle. How they tugged and wrestled, as if always trying to wrench themselves free from their burden!

Then he remembered his unfinished task at home and his broken promise. As a certain uneasiness crept over him, he stood up on the narrow shelf and began to think about climbing to the top of the car, and going back to his companions.

He turned to do so, and then, for the first time, noticed that there was no ladder on the end of the car on which he had been sitting. A glance at the car ahead showed that it also had no ladder. He had taken it for granted that two ladders were near him, for such cars usually have ladders at each end.

Now Sid began to realise what a dangerous place he was in. Something swelled up in his throat, and his heart seemed to have turned to lead. He glanced up at the car top. It was too high to be reached without a jump, and a jump was too dangerous.

Above his head the roof of the car projected. Through this the brake-rod came, ran down beside Sid, and went into the platform below. Sid thought of trying to climb this rod, but then he saw how the roof projected. He could not climb past that eave to the car's top. He might slip in trying the feat. He shivered at the thought, and gave it up.

He shouted, but the rattle of the cars drowned his voice.

The foolishness of shouting dawned upon him, and he remained quiet for a while. Then he began shouting again, as if to work off or drown his excitement. But now the strange bumping of the cars frightened him. He could not understand this bumping at all. It seemed as if the engineer wished to shake him off!

What had happened was this: the engineer, in approaching the grade, found his speed much greater than would be safe to start the descent with. So he resorted to the plan of "bumping off" some of his momentum. He would shut off steam and reverse slowly, while the draw-heads of the cars would come together with a progressive thump and rattle.

This reduced the speed of the cars behind. As soon as they began to draw again at the links the engineer would repeat the operation.

The violence of the first shock nearly threw Sid from his uncertain footing, and caused him to grasp the brake-rod for his life.

Again the cars thundered together, but Sid was prepared this time. Once more they straightened out and pulled at the draw-heads; but this time the car ahead of Sid moved farther away than usual.

Sid saw that the coupling-link had broken, and that the forward section was fast hurrying away!

In an instant the horror of his situation flashed over him. He was on the front of the rear section of seven cars. They were moving too fast to allow of his jumping off. The front section was now rapidly widening the gap. Some time might elapse before the engineer would observe that his train had parted. The result would be a race to avoid collision.

In the race the heavy rear end, unchecked by the engine, would, when it reached the steepest grade, overtake and crash into the front section. Worse might happen if the engineer forgot himself and backed up to meet the rear section. Then the wreck would be completed.

Sid, as he realised this, almost jumped off in terror. The blood forsook his face, and he cowered against the end of his ponderous moving trap, pale and trembling.

The forward section had already vanished around the first curve. The increased speed of the objects, that seemed rushing by, told Sid plainly that the rear section was feeling the effect of the increasing grade.

One hope remained to him, and that was that his friends in the caboose at the rear end would soon begin the search for him, and perhaps set the brakes in time to avert the impending crash.

But the boys and train-hands in the caboose had no thought that Sid was in imminent peril of his life, and they themselves were in great danger. Soon after starting, Karl Johnson had asked where Sid was. Some one had replied that he was forward on the engine; and as Sid had been seen going in that direction last, no one thought of him again.

All hands fell to eating hickory nuts. Even the "look-out" came down from his seat in the cupola, and joined the merry party cracking nuts and jokes around a broken draw-head in the dim light of a railway lantern.

The engineer, already late, was willing to let the engine have its own head so long as the train did not "crowd." So the forward section ran at a lively rate for a time, and widened the breach.

But the rear end, unimpeded by a single brake, was free to be impelled by gravitation down the grade at a rapidly increasing speed.

Before long the gap ceased to widen. Then, faster and faster, the ponderous, swaying, rumbling rear section began to close up on the fleeing front end.

Sid's situation was fast becoming unbearable. Beneath

him the ties and gravel poured back in an undistinguishable stream. At every turn of the road he expected to see the front section waiting to receive the rear, or at best making a feeble attempt to escape. One thing he did not understand was why the engineer did not signal the brakemen.

But the engineer was unconscious of any mishap to his train. The rapidly gathering gloom of the wild mountain way required his gaze to be constantly fixed on the track ahead. He relied on the "lookout" in the caboose to discover any accident that might befall the train, and the "lookout" had deserted his duty to crack hickory nuts with the equally careless conductor.

But at last the fireman, in rounding a curve, glanced back and discovered the state of affairs. He shouted to the engineer and sprang down to freshen the fire, for he realised that plenty of steam would be needed in the attempt to escape being run down.

The engineer was dazed for a moment. Not knowing where the break had occurred or how far behind him the rear might be, his first impulse was to throw the lever back and stop his section. But his better judgment prevailed.

He threw the lever forward, and started ahead with all the speed at his command.

Thus for a time he gained a little on his pursuer. But the swaying, pitching, mad gait threatened at every curve to throw the engine from the track. The excitement for a few moments absorbed the engineer. Then, suddenly recalling his full senses, he seized the whistle cord and sent blast after blast echoing up the mountain-side.

In the caboose, the conductor was the first to hear the signals. Springing up he listened. Again the signal blasts sounded "down brakes"; but they seemed so strange and far away that the trainmen stood puzzled.

"There's a train ahead," suggested the conductor; "but I don't see why John doesn't answer them."

"That was our whistle," answered a brakeman, springing by the conductor toward the ladder. "That's our whistle

We've broken in two and are running wild!" he shouted, as he reached the top of the first car and bent to set the brakes.

The other brakeman followed. They rushed swiftly from car to car, setting the brakes as they went. But now the speed of the cars could not be checked by the brakes that could be applied. Those on the foremost cars were not set lest they might throw the cars from the rails. Thus the predicament of Sid Asher was not discovered.

About three miles from the lower end of the grade a broad curve round a bold face of the mountains revealed the first glimmering lights of Sadbrooke. As this sight burst on Sid he could almost pick out from those glimmering specks in the distance the light that shone from his mother's cosy little cottage. She would be uneasily wondering what had become of him.

He had heard the blasts from the engine, and had waited with bated breath for the grating, tugging jounce that told him the brakes were applied. Then he heard the harsh sound of iron rasping against iron, while the speed did not abate.

Sid crawled to the end of his narrow shelf, and looked back along the train. Streak after streak of vivid light showed where the whirling, resistless wheels were flying through the useless brake-shoes. The sight deepened his despair, and he clutched the brake-rod in an ecstasy of terror.

The last curve was rounded. A straight road lay ahead to Sadbrooke, and for the first time those on the front and rear sections could judge of the chances of their awful race.

Sid saw the swinging red light on the rear car of the front section less than half a mile ahead. The rear section hurried down upon it, closing the gap with fearful rapidity. Such a solid wind held Sid against the front of his car that he would have been in little danger of falling off, even had he let go of the brake-rod. He was not afraid of falling—his danger was that the collision would smash him to pulp.

When the level was reached the rear section was less than a hundred yards in the rear of the front section, and still

gaining, though it groaned under the bonds of the brakes that were now performing their functions. A collision might yet have been averted had not an unforeseen incident occurred.

At the yard in Sadbrooke was a short stretch of side-track used for storing cars. A switchman on duty in the yard had heard the screeching signals of the flying engine far up on the mountain-side. He had seen the widely separated lights, guessed the trouble, and quickly planned to avert a collision.

His plan was to side-track the front section, and so give the rear section a free track where it might run out its strength, and be brought under control.

Had the side-track been of any considerable length, this plan might have worked. But when the engineer, turning from a glance backward, saw the red light at the side of the track ahead indicating an open switch, he believed death was ahead as certainly as behind. To make the side-track at the rate he was running was certain destruction to his engine.

His only choice was to try to make the switch at a reduced rate of speed. He shut off steam and set the brakes.

To Sid, pressed against the car, it seemed that the rear section fairly jumped across the gap. He sent up a prayer to God—he closed his eyes—he seemed to see his mother's face. Now—but still the crash did not come.

The boy opened his eyes again—a rod's distance still separated him from the car ahead. He saw that the front section had taken the switch, and he instinctively moved to one side.

The last car of the front section passed on the switch. The switchman succeeded in opening the switch enough to allow the flanges of the wheels of the rear cars to keep the main track. But a corner of the first car of the rear section struck a corner of the hindmost car of the front section.

There was a crash of breaking timbers. Then the rear section plunged forward, ploughing through the cinders and bumping over the ties for a hundred yards to a stop. But Sid heard nothing except the first crash.

The commotion was heard over the whole village, and

the people came flocking to the track. A man in running along the cinder-path at the side of the wreck stumbled over a prostrate form. He held his lantern to the white face, and knew it for that of Sid Asher.

They carried him to the railway station, and there the village surgeon examined the boy's form with amazement. None of his bones were broken. He still breathed. If he were not internally injured he might recover.

In fact, he did recover, simply because he had moved to the farthest edge of his car just before the crash occurred. The shock flung him forward and to one side, where the loose cinders had broken the force of his fall.

Sid was about again in a few days, but the terrible experience of that ride put an end to the club of "Bumper Jumpers."

SIDNEY'S BODY-SERVANT.

BY SARAH WINTER KELLOGG.

SOON after eight o'clock on Christmas morning "big Ben" was ordered to blow his best blasts on the plantation horn, that the slaves might assemble at "the house." Feeling Christmas "in his bones," Ben was in the mood for a grand effort. Swiftly the brave blasts assailed every ear on the Houston plantation, and "the quarters" hummed with curiosity and delight.

"Reckon that means Christmas gif's," said the slaves, and eagerly made haste toward their master's house, smiling, joking, expectant. The holiday dress, the Christmas glow, the brilliant sunshine of the morning in early winter, enhanced the picturesqueness of people always quaint.

"Christmas gif', master!" "Christmas gif', master!" the slaves cried to the gentleman who stood smiling in his portico.

"I've got a tolerably good Christmas gift for you this time," responded the planter. "I've got a bran' new master for you—Sidney Houston, one hour old."

"Hooraw for little master!" cried big Ben.

"Hooraw for little master!" "Hooraw for our Christmas gif'!" shouted the people.

"Next year you must raise a heap of cotton bales for your new master."

"Hooraw for little master's big cotton craps." "Christmas gif', master!" "Christmas gif', master!"

"You beggars!" laughed the planter. "Well, come along with you—one at a time."

Exploring all his pockets, he handed to each negro as they went filing by, a half-dollar, adding a "picayune" for each child, as parents reported the little ones.

"And now I want you mammies to bring your little fellows here—the boys from two years old to six. The likeliest one of them I want for little master's body-servant."

When the boys were in line, under review, the master passed along its length, keen of eye, critical of heart. To an open-faced black boy he at length spoke :

"What's your name?"

"Wess," said the child.

"Master, his name's Jawn Wezley Bonypaut," put in the proud mother.

"How old is he, Silvy?"

"He's fo', gwine on five, thanky, master."

"Is he a good boy?"

"He's mighty good, master; a heap better'n t'other childun."

"Well, I think I'll take him for little master's body-servant." The planter patted the head of the elected child.

"Now you may go to see your new master. You may come, too, Silvy," said Mr. Houston, and led to where the baby lay.

"You belong to him, Wesley," said the planter. The black child grinned, responsive, rolling his eyes at the red mite.

"When he plays out-of-doors," said baby's mother, faintly, "you must watch over him, and keep everything from hurting him."

"Danders an' tuckies?" asked the body-servant, remembering his mortal foes. Then he loyally offered his arms, to bear little master to mammy's cabin. Instead of this he was himself sent to the plantation seamstress for a new suit of clothes.

Before the little master was responding to his mother's coaxings for smiles, the valet's service began. He rocked the cradle, carried messages between nursery and kitchen, held the cup while "mistis" fed the mint-tea, and ate the sweet residuum. In due course of six months he stood by

baby's high-chair at table, scaring off flies with a branch of flowering almond or of crape-myrtle. He came to know the infantile graces "by heart," and could better "show off the baby" than the mother could.

When Sidney was five years old he was attended everywhere by Wesley. Together they hunted the high grass and yellow wheat for partridge nests, or scoured the woods for persimmons and muscadines. Together they hunted 'possum and coon, or built traps to snare the weak folk of the woods. Wherever the little master was seen, there was the strong negro valet, of twice the white boy's height.

The close companionship extended into the book-world. Not that Wesley learned to read,—the law forbade teaching the slave to read,—but Sidney was fond of reading aloud, and Wesley was the best of listeners. When Sidney came to read of William Tell, the slave heart as well as the free heart swelled high. When Wesley heard the "Star-Spangled Banner" he felt the thrill of patriotism. He wanted to be free, and to show himself brave. "Britons never shall be slaves;" at this his heart burned.

Why was he a slave? Why was his mother a slave? He heard about the North, where coloured people were free; and about Canada from which "runaways" were not returned to bondage. As Sidney's attendant he had large liberties, but he never forgot his slavery. The more he learned from the white boy's reading, of other lands and other life, the more he wanted liberty to see other lands and other life. The more he was read to, the more he longed to read for himself.

So lived Sidney and Wesley till that day in autumn when the boys went netting quails, or partridges, as they called the little fat birds. They followed the furrows the length of a cotton-field, between lines of russet stalks flecked with the white of belated bolls, but perceived no signs of game until they had gone a quarter-mile among the brown black-jacks. These made up the "piece of woods," over the fence from the cotton-field. The "sign" was the sweet, humanlike call "Bob White! Bob White!"

"Let's set up the net," Sidney eagerly said.

"We will tolerbul soon," Wesley replied.

They spoke cautiously and went on, treading warily, looking for brush to cover the net. "Bob White!" Again came the pretty call. It seemed but a few yards off.

"Now!" whispered Wesley, and straightway began stretching on the brown leaves a sack of coarse twine mesh. Its mouth was held open by a barrel hoop, while at yard intervals were other hoops, gradually decreasing in size to the closed end.

"And it's just the colour of the brown leaves," said Sidney, "so the partridges won't see it."

"The brush hides it first-rate. Now we'll set up the wings."

These were two straight lines of netting, held stretched by sticks sharpened and stuck in the ground. When set, these wings, or walls, of brown net splayed from the open mouth of the funnel.

"The partridges will never notice them," the boys agreed, seating themselves to await the coming birds.

"Bob White!" Clear and musical the call rang amid the woods.

"Bob White!" answered a little sweetheart, or perhaps the mother.

"Don't wink!" Wesley whispered. "They are almost here."

It seemed a long time till they heard the trip! trip! trip! trip! on the dry leaves, like the soft patter of raindrops. Two hearts beat fast, and four keen eyes gleamed at the brown bits coming on by a log and scarcely distinguishable from wind-stirred leaves.

"It's them!" Wesley whispered.

"Yes," Sidney said, "I see 'em. There's a heap of them; must be 'most twenty. Aren't they pretty? Oh, but they are turning the wrong way!"

"We'll have to creep 'roun' easy, an' drive them to'ards the net. If they only get started runnin' 'long by one of them net-wings, they'll go right 'long into the net."

Cautiously the boys crept through the bush to get in the rear of the covey. Then by gentle approaches the flock was kept moving toward the bush that concealed the fatal snare. Trip! trip! trip! went the little feet of the lovely brood, led by the confident mother. Along the net's length went the twinkling feet and little bobbing brown heads wearing white favours, till at the funnel's mouth they massed—a brown cushion, white-tufted. Then in and in stepped the eager feet.

"There! they are all in!" Sidney took a long, glad breath.

"They are, sho's yo' bawn!" Wesley assented.

Both hastily pressed forward for the net, startling the little captives. Every bird rose on wing. Alas! the dismay of those little hearts to find themselves held down by the pitiless mesh! Instead of the boundless ether, a snare!

The boys drove the birds to the funnel's small end, where the brownies huddled together, pressing their frightened heads under neighbouring wings, seeking to hide from the enemy.

Wesley gathered up the net, warm and heavy now. Then the heart of the slave swelled with a sudden pity for the captives. Their lot was like his; he, too, was struggling in a net.

"Poor things!" he said; "poor cotched things!"

Then with an opening movement to the net he added swiftly, "I'm goin' to let 'em out."

"You sha'n't let them go!" said Sidney, snatching in a desperate way at the net.

But the snare was already opened. With a great whirring, away went the Bob Whites on glad wings.

In unreasoning anger Sidney struck Wesley, and that in the mouth. A blow on the lips was ranked as the most insulting of blows. Wesley, though a slave, had the spirit of those who hold that the dishonour of any blow should be avenged. Forgetting that he was his little master's protector, forgetting that he was older and larger than the white child, he yielded to the impulse of the hot moment, and struck back a stinging blow on Sidney's cheek.

Next moment he might have been on his knees, begging forgiveness at his little master's feet, but for Sidney's angry threat.

"I'll have you flogged for this!" cried Sidney, with hot tears.

The tears touched the slave; the words stung him. He had never been flogged, and was a man in height; but he made no reply. Sidney, pulling up the wings, continued:

"I'm going straight home, and have the overseer flog you."

Partly from a habit of fidelity to his little master, and partly because there seemed nothing else to do, Wesley followed home. There all the story was told, the slave denying nothing. Mr. Houston heard without comment; then he wrote on a slip of paper and handed the slip to Wesley. "Take this to the overseer."

Dismay clutched at the slave boy's heart as he walked away in the dusk toward the overseer's cabin.

"This orders him to cowhide me," he said to his burning heart; "but I won't be cowed! I won't! I won't!"

When out of sight he turned and went with swift pace to his mother's cabin. There, with rapid, hot words, he told his story, and added:

"Gimme my supper; I'm goin' to run away."

"An' be a run'way nigger!" Silvy said, with measureless scorn.

"No use talkin' ginst it!" he said, impatiently.

"Arter master an' mistis an' Master Sidney is all been good tow yo'; an' arter you's been fed like white folks, an' wore good clothes an' boots an'——"

"No use pussuadin', mammy, I'se goin' to go," Wesley interrupted, "for I ain't never been whipped, an' I ain't goin' to be. I'm goin' Nawth an' yearn money, an' come back an' buy yo'."

"Buy me!" exclaimed the woman, with a snort. "Mas Houston doan' neber sell his folks, an' he wouldn't sell *me* fer nothin' in dis worl'. How'd dey-all git 'long on dis

plantation widout me tow cook fer de fiel' han's? 'Sides, I'd a heap ruther b'long tow Master Houston dan tow a culled boy like you."

But Wesley declared his mind made up; and went on to explain that for some days he should hide on "the place," because the folks wouldn't think to look so near at hand for him. Then after they should think him "clean gone," he would "light out for good." In the meantime, mammy must, every day, place food where he could get it.

"So where'll you hide the victuals for me?"

"I ain't sho's I'll hide no victuals fer yo'," she said. "I ain't neber harboured no run'ways yit. Ef I does hide any, reckon I'll hide it in dat holler sweet-gum tree dat's got dat heap of mistletoe in it."

Wesley, "a runaway" for three days, had been lurking about the farm, fed by his mother. Now the last afternoon had come; that night he should start "for good." He was to leave the old plantation for ever, little master and mammy. He was feeling sad and lonely, beginning to wish that he had taken the flogging and stayed where people cared for him.

His thoughts were interrupted by a noise up the hill—"Ke-chow!" He knew the sound as well as he knew his mother's face. From his hiding-place his eyes searched the hill in vain. He looked into the tree-tops, but saw no unusual agitation.

"Ke-chow!" Again he heard the familiar sound. This time he saw the lower branches of a chestnut-tree in motion. He had too often clubbed nuts from the trees for little master to mistake that sound—the sound of a stick thrown into a tree. Who was throwing into the tree on the hill for chestnuts?

"Wonder if it's little master?" he thought.

"Ke-chow!" This time Wesley saw the stick rising. Sending his eye backward along its path, he saw little master.

"All by his lone, when I ought to be there helping him," Wesley thought, reproachfully. "How I'd jes' like to go

up thar an' make them ches'nuts git, till thar'd be so many that Marse Sidney couldn't tote 'em all home !"

He watched the boy lovingly, commenting on all his movements.

"Oughter brought you' hatchet 'long, an' cut good, solid sticks," he said. "You ain't knocked off many, Marse Sid. You ought to have me up thar to git the nuts outen the burrs ; they'll prick you' fingers. An' now you'll keep on eatin' till thar won't be one left to take to mistis," he remonstrated, as Sidney sat on the ground munching nuts.

Close by the chestnut-tree a grape-vine swung. Through years the creeper had patiently climbed to a home in the tree-top, where it could hang out its clusters in the sunshine. Then some ruthless hand had cut it from the root ; so there it hung, swaying in the wind—a dead thing.

The body-servant saw the little master reaching with a hooked stick for the swaying grape-vine stalk, and commented :

"Now he's goin' to take a swing."

The vine had rooted on the steep hillside ; the stalk now overhung a deep ravine.

"Better take keer, little master !" Even as Wesley was thus thinking, the white boy lost his balance.

Wesley heard the cry of terror, saw the appalling fall ; but the slave boy remembered in that supreme moment that he was a runaway. To go to little master's help was to give himself up to the vengeance of his defied owner. He wavered when he saw his own great peril standing over against his heart's duty ; but this hesitation was brief. He thought once of the overseer and of the outraged master, and then the fugitive slave went running, leaping, climbing, scrambling to the side of little master. There lay the dear body in a still heap.

"He's dead ! he's dead !" the slave boy cried aloud. Then with all his might he shouted, "Help ! help ! help ! help !"

But the house was far away, and the black folks were yet farther off, in the cotton fields. "Help ! help ! help !" cried Wesley, but no one heard him.

Meanwhile he was straightening out the body, supporting the hanging head, blowing into the mouth, rubbing the hands and chest, imploring the eyes to open, the lips to speak, protesting to the deaf ears.

"I am your Wessy, dear little master," he cried. "Oh, he's dead! he's dead! Po' little master! an' on account of me! I oughter been thar! Po' little master!"

Once he decided to leave the body and speed away for help: but he remembered the half-wild hogs that were roaming the woods for mast. Then he lifted the body and strained with it up the steep.

How he ever made that ascent and the way through the thick woods over logs and brush, mid tangled vines, they can tell who have felt the unnatural strength which grand passion lends.

He stopped for one breath, then pushed on beyond the woods, panting, his lips parted, his eyes staring straight ahead. He passed the sweet-potato patch, passed the gin-house and the horse-lot, the orchard and the garden; went through the yard; called with all his might; staggered up the porch-steps. There little master's father came through the door to the portico.

What he said the slave heard not. With one look from the dear, quiet face to the face of the dismayed man, Wesley laid little master in the father's arms and fell in a swoon to the floor.

Next day Wesley was told the physician's verdict. Sidney had received severe concussion of the brain, and his leg was broken; but he would soon regain complete consciousness, and probably make a good recovery. For two days after this the body-servant hovered in the neighbourhood of the sick-room, peeping in at the windows and at the door-crack. Meanwhile Sidney was begging for admittance to be granted Wesley.

It was a happy moment for Wesley when he was summoned to the house. He was to see little master for the first time since the coming back from the dead. As he entered the

sick-room Sidney half-raised himself on the couch, eagerly holding out his hand and smiling a glad smile.

"Howdy, Marse Sidney!" Wesley said. When he had taken the offered hand he was pulled down; tight about his neck were little master's arms, while the slave boy's eyes were running over.

Then they talked about the accident; and the little master said: "You won't run away again, will you, Wessy? What made you run away? 'Cause you wanted to be free?"

"I wanted to be free, but that wasn't all the reason. I didn't want the overseer to flog me."

"He wouldn't have dared to flog you," said little master, his face flushing. "I wouldn't have let him, and papa wouldn't have let him."

"Yes, your pa would; master was goin' to let him. He gave me a paper to take to him, that told him to whip me."

"No, that paper didn't tell the overseer to whip you," said the white boy, so excitedly that the planter and Mrs. Houston came in. The father was appealed to by Sidney as to the character of the paper.

"It told him to set you to picking cotton, and to keep you at it for a week. As you boys had been fighting, I concluded to separate you for a time."

In Wesley's first look during the explanation was surprise; in the next, relief; in the third, shame.

"Beg yo' pardon, master, for thinkin' you could do it. I didn't have no business to think it. You've always been mighty good to me, master."

"And you've been good to my boy," the master returned.

"We owe you his life," said Mrs. Houston, "and we want to make you some kind of present. Here is your mother come to see you receive it."

"You want to be free——" the planter paused.

The slave's heart leaped to his throat, and wildly throbbed there; a haze came between him and his mother's face. Little master was gazing with eager smile in Wesley's face; the

mistress was looking at it through tears. All saw in it the passion of hope.

"Wesley," the planter went on, "I freely give you your freedom, and your mother's. You are both free."

The boy dropped at the man's feet, crying through the rain of tears, "Thanky, master! Thanky, for ever!"

The slave-mother's gratitude mounted to higher expression. Raising her eyes and lifting high her arms, she exclaimed:

"Tank God! Praise de Lawd! De Jubilee is comed!"

"Here are your free papers all ready; so when you wish to go North you can go by daylight, along the highways, with money in your pockets and with our blessing."

"Does we haf ter go?" mammy suddenly asked.

"No," the little master said, glowingly.

"Bekase yo' all couldn't git 'long on dis plantation widout me. I ain't gwine off dis yere plantation to lif, sho's yo' bawn. Ain't no use in bein' free ef I can't stay whar I wants to."

Wesley is still on the old plantation, earning good wages and respected as the master's body-servant and trusty friend.

WISE AND OTHERWISE.



THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM.

BY FRANK M. BICKNELL.

THERE was trouble between Abdullah, the scribe, and Hussein, the goldlace-maker. This is how it was brought about

Against the high wall that enclosed the Cadi's grounds sat Abdullah, the scribe, smoking and drowsing. The afternoon sun was warm, no one was moving in the narrow street, and all was silence, save for the occasional low gurgle of the scribe's kalkan, or water-pipe. Comfortably, with a cushion at his back and a square of felt carpeting beneath him, he sat upon his heels under a beautiful awning. (In truth, the awning was but a big faded cotton umbrella, which he had bought for two kerans from a *feringhi* trader; but it was green, it was wide-spreading, it gave shade. What more did the broad leaved sycamores whose graceful tops could be seen above the walls in the garden behind him?)

Business was at a standstill; even the coolest of the bazaar was well nigh empty; no one came to have writing done, but Abdullah was quite content. If he were not disturbed, so much the better, all the more time to doze. He had eaten and drunk his fill, there was silver in his pouch, he had not a care in the world. What possible harm could befall him, unless some heedless donkey-driver should pass too near, and

the beast's overhanging load chance to upset the beautiful awning? That would not be irreparable damage. Abdullah's eyelids were heavy, his bearded lips parted, the flexible tube of the kalian fell from his hand, his turbaned head sank forward upon his bosom, his breath came heavily—he slept.

A gentle plucking at his gown awoke the scribe. A slave, a Zanzibari, black, gigantic, and exceedingly ugly, stood before him humbly salaaming. Beside him was a porcelain vessel covered with a fine napkin, which he knelt and presented.

"My master," quoth he, "Hussein, the goldlace-maker, greets Abdullah, son of Ali, and begs him to accept this little gift of snow brought this day from the mountain-top."

Abdullah took the snow and cooled his lips, hot with sleep.

"My master expects five mule-loads of ripe grapes to come from the country, and he entreats the loan of a certain capacious jar—which, by your condescending favour, he hath had before—as he desires to begin making wine on the morrow."

Abdullah, the scribe, was not glib of tongue, but his pen was nimble and cunning. He took paper, and wrote to Hussein at length. When he had finished the writing he wetted his finger, smeared it with ink, blackened his seal, and set the impress thereof at the bottom of the letter—"Abdullah, son of Ali." Then he rolled up the sheet, tied it neatly about with a bit of silk, and handed it to the Zanzibari.

The latter departed to his master's dwelling, but being of a curious nature, presently he stopped in the street and unrolled the letter. He could not read very well, but he was more than willing to increase his knowledge in that direction. While he stood trying to puzzle out the meaning of the unfamiliar characters a burly water-carrier passed, and, swinging his heavy skin against him, knocked the scroll from his hand. Frightened lest it had become soiled and should cause him to catch a beating, the black picked it up in great haste, carefully brushed off the dust, and endeavoured to make it look as it had on leaving the hands of the scribe. But in his hurry and his

ignorance he commenced to roll it from the top, thus bringing the end of it where it should not have been—that is, inside.

When Hussein opened the scroll, Abdullah's seal first met his gaze ; and so, in a manner, he began to read the letter backward. He had not proceeded far with his reading, however, ere his face flushed, he fetched a quick, gasping breath, and his eyes blazed with anger. Then the Zanzibari, knowing himself to be culpable, fled trembling, and hid himself.

In the cool of the evening, after his day's labours—and slumbers—were over, Abdullah went, according to his custom, to the tea-garden. There he sat at table under the shelter of some stunted trees, and was served with tiny cups filled with cut sugar, upon which scalding hot weak tea was poured. It was syrup flavoured with tea, but it suited his taste, and he drank a great deal of it, and spent many agreeable hours in the garden, where, indeed, entertainment of another sort was not lacking. There came often the ragamuffin *luti*, who played all sorts of buffoonish pranks ; there came occasionally jugglers from Arabia, who could perform the most marvellous feats with the greatest apparent ease ; there too came dancers sometimes, and almost always the little hunchback came who told such entertaining stories.

While Abdullah was in the act of dissolving the sugar in his third cup Hussein entered the garden. No sooner did the goldlace-maker catch sight of the scribe than he rushed toward him, crying :

"Ah, wretch ! I will teach thee to malign an honest man. Take that, thou son of a burnt father !" And he struck him a blow in the face.

How Abdullah might have responded to this attack will never be known, for at the next moment the proprietor of the garden, who desired no brawling upon his premises, interfered with a strong hand. Hussein resisted him, and in the end the police were summoned, and both the goldlace-maker and the scribe were locked up for the night.

On the morrow the twain were brought before the Cadi.

The latter was a personage of importance, serious and dignified of mien, as became so high a magistrate. He sat among luxurious cushions, with a Habashi slave at his back waving a large fan, and another kneeling at his feet to keep his pipe alight. At his command the officer of the law who had made the arrest stated the facts of the case as far as he himself was acquainted with them. The Cadi was a man of weight, and gave out weighty decisions. He did nothing hastily. After smoking long and deliberating much, he opened his mouth and addressed himself to Hussein as follows, "Why did you revile and raise your hand against this man?"

"For no other reason, better or worse, than that he insulted and slandered me," replied the goldlace-maker wrathfully. "Listen, O Excellency, and decide between us. As I hope for the rewards of paradise, it is the truth I shall speak. Yesterday afternoon I sent to this man, who is my neighbour, asking him most courteously to lend me a jar, as I expected ten *lodahs* [baskets] of ripe grapes from the vineyards, and lacked sufficient vessels for holding the juice. In place of sending me a civil reply, what did he do but write me a scurrilous letter, wherein he asserted that my mother's brother once borrowed from his wife's father a jar, for the use of his third wife, who wished to make cucumber jam, and never returned it."

The Cadi drew in several whiffs of the fragrant *tumbak*, the fine tobacco of Jarum, seeming the while to meditate profoundly upon what he had just heard.

"A serious, a very serious charge," he remarked at length. "Is it untrue?"

"As Allah is my witness, it is a black falsehood," cried the accuser, with heat.

"Mean you that the jar borrowed by your mother's brother for the use of his third wife was duly returned to this man's wife's father?"

"He did not return it, O Cadi, for several reasons, good and sufficient."

"Enumerate the reasons," ordered the Cadi.

"So will I, gladly," returned Hussein. "In the first place my mother's brother borrowed no jar from this man's wife's father to use in making cucumber jam ; secondly, my mother's brother's third wife never even thought of making any cucumber jam ; thirdly, my mother's brother had no third wife, or any wife at all ; fourthly, my mother had no brother ; fifthly and finally, this man, 'Abdullah, is a bachelor, and therefore no such person ever existed as his wife's father. 'Thus you can see, O Excellency, the entire accusation was utterly groundless."

The magistrate did not assent to this, but smoked in silence for some minutes ; then turning to Abdullah, he queried : "What have you to say in your defence ?"

The scribe, not troubling himself to unseal his lips, simply waved his hand, by way of reply, toward the letter which Hussein had thrust into his girdle and brought to prove the truth of his story.

"Show me the writing," commanded the Cadi ; and, having received it, he put on his horn-rimmed spectacles and glanced with exceeding deliberation through the contents. When he had quite mastered the meaning, and had pondered over it for several minutes, he returned the scroll.

"Hussein," quoth he, "you have been overhasty. I find written there no cause for offence whatever. You are fined five kerans for disturbing the peace, and five more for assaulting your neighbour without provocation. 'The case is dismissed."

Hussein, astounded and greatly chapfallen, took the letter and examined it more carefully than he had done before, this time beginning to read it from the beginning. When he had finished he heaved a deep sigh, and knowing there was no appeal from the Cadi's decision, he reluctantly laid down his ten pieces of silver and went away in very low spirits.

Now the contents of the letter which had cost the hot-tempered goldlace-maker ten kerans were quite different from what at first sight they appeared. The letter was addressed, "In the name of Allah, to the much-esteemed Hussein, son of Hassan." After a long and flowery greeting to his "brother

and friend," with many wishes for his prosperity, present and future, and profuse thanks for the gift of snow, the scribe went on to say :

"Because I am slow of speech, and likewise because what is spoken is not always correctly heard or properly reported, therefore I write to you this letter. Plunged in grief and desolation am I that I cannot oblige you, toward whom I have so great and abounding friendship, with the loan of the jar for which you have done me the honour to ask. But in truth it is no longer serviceable, having had a large hole in the bottom now these six months. Furthermore, I have not the jar in my possession, since it was stolen from me by a rascally camel-driver who spent the night under my roof, and thus basely repaid my hospitality.

"Believe me, brother, my regret that I cannot do you this small kindness is greater than yours. My regard for you and my wish to merit your consideration are beyond expression. You are ever in my thoughts when I am awake, and often while I slumber. Indeed, when your slave aroused me but now, I was thinking of you and dreaming a strange, absurd, impossible dream, in which I had the unpardonable boldness to imagine that your mother's brother once borrowed from my wife's father a jar, for the use of his third wife, who wished to make cucumber jam—and never returned it."

FERINGHI AND THE MAGICIANS ;

OR, THE TRIUMPH OF COMMON-SENSE.

BY JAMES CARTER BEARD.

IN a deep cavern in the Himalaya Mountains lived three famous magicians, who were so learned in the science of China and India that they could make gold pieces vanish, turn diamonds into charcoal, pearls to dust, and tell the colour of your grandmother's hair by gazing into your left eye. But with all their learning, they needed some one to look after them.

"Our time is so taken up," they said, "in doing extraordinary things, we have none to spare for ordinary ones."

To do common things rightly demands common-sense. The three magicians at first tried to select the person they needed from among those who came to consult them about lost property or getting married ; but not one of these could be found who had the smallest glimmering of common-sense. At last, however, they succeeded in discovering the person for whom they were looking. He was only a well-grown boy. He carried a bow and a quiver of arrows at his back. As he crossed the bridge, over which ran the path that led to the mouth of the cave where the magicians lived, he met one of them weeping and bewailing his hard fate. Alas ! a golden vase full of precious gems and an amulet that brought good fortune to its possessor had been stolen, and the thief had escaped with the treasure.

On hearing this the lad thanked the magician, and turned to go away.

"For what am I thanked, and why do you depart?" asked the magician.

"I thank you because you have kept me from making a fool of myself," replied his visitor. "The fact is, I have lost the axe with which I gain my livelihood. My neighbours managed to half persuade me that you could help me find it; but if you cannot keep thieves away from your own door, and cannot find your own property when it is stolen, common-sense tells me that I am on the wrong road to find my axe."

"This common-sense of which you speak," said the magician, "is the amulet we seek, the treasured jewels are sound judgment, and the golden vase is the mind that contains them. Listen. The Grand Lama has promised to reward the wisest of his magicians. We meet to compare our skill at Lhosa. You shall accompany us, and do common things for us."

The boy, whom they called Feringhi, though the name does not necessarily mean common-sense, was now taken into the cavern and introduced to the other two magicians, and immediately began to help them prepare for their journey. Having set out, they arrived at length at the marshes that lie between Lhosa and that part of the mountain where the magicians lived.

"The surface of this marsh," said Gazoo, the youngest of the three magicians, "is too solid to permit the passage of a boat, but too soft to allow us to walk upon it, too wide to leap across, and too deep to wade through."

"Verily, it is like the wisdom taught us in our books," said Lala, the next brother. "Let us sit here for seven days and seven nights in silent contemplation of this difficulty."

The other two magicians were quite willing to do so, until Feringhi pointed out to them that much contemplation had already delayed their journey so greatly that there really remained no time to lose if they were to be at the shrine of the Grand Lama at the appointed day.

"Since, then, we must hasten," said Foofoo, "I shall inhale enough of my celebrated, highly concentrated, double-distilled extract of batrachararum to change my outward shape into

that of a frog for the space of half an hour, ample time to cross the marsh, when, on the further shore, I shall resume my natural form."

"For my part," said Lala, "I shall turn turtle. The creature suits my fancy—slow and dignified, much given to retiring within himself in silent contemplation, and not easily disturbed."

Gazoo chose to be a microbe. He intended to cross the marsh on the left eyelid of the turtle.

"But what shall we make of you?" asked the magicians of Feringhi. "Will you prefer to be a tadpole, a newt, or a water-snake?"

Feringhi begged them to give themselves no trouble on his account, assuring them that he would find means to cross the marsh, without ceasing to be human; and that if they would allow him to do so, he would see them safely to the other side in their own proper shapes of men.

But the magicians began to believe that Feringhi had not the sense with which they credited him.

"Unless you consent to be turned into something——" cried Foofoo.

"We shall have to leave you——" said Lala.

"For our journey, as you have said——" remarked Gazoo.

"Admits no further delay," added Foofoo.

Feringhi, however, protested so stoutly that he knew what he was about that they had no choice but to leave him to his own devices. They had scarcely ceased speaking to him when the lad saw lying upon the sward where the magicians had stood but a moment before a large mud-turtle and a great goggle-eyed frog. As for the microbe, it was too small to be seen. Feringhi was deeply interested. He observed the animals closely. Something appeared to be the matter with them. The frog, instead of leaping after the manner of his kind, was scarcely able to crawl slowly and awkwardly out upon the marsh, while the turtle, dragging itself to the low bank overhanging the marsh, fell over it upon its back, and began to sink helplessly into the suffocating mud. At the

same time a large secretary-bird, one of a flock foraging about the marsh in search of food, spied the hapless frog, and hastened to gobble him up. It was indeed a moment of peril to these great magicians, and would without doubt have been the last ever heard of them, had not Feringhi, hastily fitting an arrow to his bow, shot the secretary-bird just as it was about to seize its prey, and then ran to the turtle, and taking him out of the mire, turned him "right side up with care." The truth of the matter is, as the magicians afterwards explained at great length to Feringhi, they had omitted to learn and practise their parts, and did not know how to act frog and turtle after they had assumed their shapes, which showed that in its own way a frog or a turtle may know more than learned magicians.

Foofoo, Lala, and Gazoo were, however, after recovering their natural shapes, a little more willing to believe that Feringhi's common-sense had not deserted him, and to consider any plan he had to propose to get them out of their difficulty. Feringhi's plan was a very simple one, but none the less effective, perhaps, on that account. From a great teak-tree, uprooted by a tempest and partly decayed, he wrenched large sections of thick bark, which he broke into eight parts of something like equal size. Of these he retained two, and gave two to each of the magicians. Recommending them to follow his example, he placed one of his pieces of bark upon the surface of the marsh, where it supported him as he stepped upon it, carrying with him the other piece, which he placed further on. In this manner, by alternately putting one piece before the other, he went across, followed by the magicians. The party proceeded safely on their journey, until they came to the forests amid the rocks on the shores of the Lake Vandok Cho, where an adventure occurred that still amuses the good people of India and their children, as they tell the story amongst themselves.

In the depths of the forest the three wise and learned men found embedded in the rock the scattered bones of an extinct monster. As they paused to examine the fossil bones, and

guess what the animal looked like when alive, it occurred to them to try what their art could do in reconstructing the curious monster. Gazoo succeeded in causing the bones to separate themselves from the rock, and form a complete and perfect skeleton. Lala, by means of a similar exercise of his art, covered the bones with flesh, muscle, and fat, and even restored the scales, the proper covering of the creature when alive. It was certainly very wonderful. There lay a great dragon, as perfect as though it had just fallen asleep, instead of having been dead for countless centuries.

"Our sacred writings," said Foofoo, turning to his brothers, with a smile of superiority, "tell us that 'He who restores a habitation fallen into ruins shall be called the Wonderful Benefactor, but he who restores to life the perishing, he it is who has entered the Perfect Way.' You have given the creature form, I will fill up that form with its proper life."

When Feringhi found that Foofoo was about to restore the great beast to life, he begged to be allowed to first bind its limbs with flexible vines, so that it could do them no harm.

"And leave it to slowly die of hunger and thirst, after having restored to it the capacity for suffering?" asked Foofoo, indignantly. "I am incapable of such cruelty. Fear not; the instinct of gratitude in the dragon's heart will prevent him from injuring us."

This Feringhi did not believe, and made all the haste he could to climb into a large tree, where he stationed himself among the branches, strung his bow, and loosened his arrows in his quiver. It was well he did so, for no sooner were Foofoo's exertions successful, and the spirit of life infused into the great reptile, than, springing to its feet and glaring upon the terrified magicians, it leaped without a moment's hesitation upon Foofoo and bore him to the earth. Not less quickly, however, an arrow from Feringhi's bow buried itself in the side of the monster. Another followed with unerring aim, and still another, all directed to the most defenceless parts, where impenetrable scales did not protect the body,

until the dragon sank to the earth, and lay there as it lay before life had been conjured into it, except that the earth all about was stained with the blood that flowed from its many wounds.

Arriving at Lhosa, the magicians and Feringhi were met by an armed guard, taken into custody, and immediately carried to the mountain-temple Potata. Here, on a lofty terrace, beneath a gilded canopy, they were brought into the presence of the Grand Lama. Below them, from their great height, they could see his innumerable votaries thronging from every direction to kneel before the holy mountain, and here, on a golden throne shaped like a lotus-flower, sat his Sacred Majesty, giving an audience to governors of provinces and kings of nations. Falling prostrate before him, they heard him say, in tones of displeasure :

“The humblest and most despised living creature is more sacred to Buddha than the vanity of fools. The soul of the secretary-bird killed on the marshes, and that of the dragon, so cruelly brought to life only to be again slaughtered, have come to me calling for justice. This is the decree of the Enlightened, decreed in the name of the Sinless One, that you four culprits be taken to the field adjoining my temple, at the base of the rock upon which it is founded. Here shall you dig the foundations of your prison-house, which you shall build, therein to pass the rest of your present lives in close captivity. Nevertheless, should one escape before the prison-house is built, and by so much as the seventh part of a day, between the rising and setting of the sun, elude my search, you shall all be released. Only know this : that he who thus releases his fellows shall be master and the rest his servants. Verily, I have a crystal tube which will show me all disguises, shapes of enchantment, hiding-places to the ends of the earth, and much farther ; and indeed the more subtle the disguise and the greater the distance, the more clearly does it show me what I seek to see.”

In utter despair the three magicians, and Feringhi, who did not, like them, give up all hope of escape, were led down

three hundred staircases to the valley below. Here they were instructed in the task assigned them, and after a time set to work. As soon as Feringhi perceived that they were carelessly guarded, for, relying on the crystal tube of their master, the servants of the Grand Lama did not believe the escape of the prisoners possible, instead of following the orders given him, he did a little work on his own account. He made a trench large enough to lie down in. At one end he dug a small hole which, while he was careful not to widen at the mouth, he enlarged as it grew deeper. When the hour drew near for noonday prayers, he lay down in the trench he had dug, with his face over the hole, so that he could breathe the air in it, and asked the magicians to cover him up with loose earth.

"No," said Foofoo, "we cannot have your soul accusing us to the Grand Lama, like those of the bird and the dragon. Unhappy is the day we ever met you!"

But Feringhi at last persuaded them to do as he wished. When the guards, who had been asleep in the shade of the temple, awoke to find one of their prisoners missing, they only shook their heads and smiled.

"It will be the worse for all of you when our holy master finds him with his crystal tube, and by his magic power brings him back again," said they. "Our prisoners almost always try once, but never twice, to escape."

The Grand Lama, hearing of the disappearance of his prisoner, also smiled, and taking up his crystal tube, descended, as was necessary, to the place where the prisoner had been last seen. Taking his stand over the very spot wherein Feringhi lay buried, he again smiled, as he adjusted his crystal tube and looked to the west. In a moment's time he ceased smiling and directed his gaze to the north. After looking a little longer than before, his face-assumed a slightly perplexed expression, as he turned to the east. A look of troubled astonishment crept over his sacred features as he once more turned and looked to the south. He muttered something to himself, and tried north-east, south-east, north-west, south-

west—in short, he boxed the compass with his detective crystal, and all to no purpose.

"It may well be," thought the Grand Lama, "he has escaped to some distant planet"; but though he adjusted his crystal tube and searched the whole solar system again and again, and even looked farther, he could not find his escaped prisoner.

The sacred gongs clashed, the seventh part of a day had passed, and Feringhi was free. Rising alive from the grave he had made for himself, at the very feet of the Grand Lama, the only spot in the universe that the Great Intelligencer had never thought of looking at, and prostrating himself, he asked the fulfilment of the promises made him.

Startled and confounded, the Grand Lama retreated a pace or two, and made a magic gesture to ward off danger.

"That must be done at once," said the Grand Lama, who, strange as it may seem, was a man of his word.

The three magicians were then summoned and made to understand that thenceforth they were to be the servants of their former servant.

"It is always well," said the Grand Lama, "when common-sense governs learning and even religion in the persons of her servants, for I cannot conceal from myself that Feringhi has also proved himself my superior in practical wisdom. He has gained the prize reserved for the wisest, pre-eminence and power and government, as long as he deals justly and mercifully with the weak and ignorant."

A REAL AFRICAN SWELL.

BY W. J. HENDERSON.

THE old sailor was in a state of excitement. He did not wait for the boys to go down to his humble dwelling and endeavour to persuade him to tell them one of his surprising yarns. He ran up to their house instead, and bursting in with a rush, exclaimed: "Mebbe you will and mebbe you won't; 'tain't fur me fur to go fur to say. But ef you don't, you is chumpish."

"What ever do you mean?" cried Henry.

"Cap'n Gawge Hennery Bagg, wot were skipper o' the brig *Ellen Mush* w'en I war fust mate o' her, an' wot got wracked on the east coast o' Afrikee, are come to wisit me, an' ef you don't come down an' hear wot he's got to say, you'll be mighty sorry."

The boys sprang up and at once followed the old sailor, who led the way to the village hotel. Perhaps his statement that Captain Bagg had come there expressly to visit him was a slight exaggeration. At any rate the captain had just returned from a long visit at the summer home of a wealthy steamship-owner near the pier.

"Cap'n Bagg," said the old sailor, "here is them two young gen'lem'n wot I war a-tellin' ye about, wot has so much fondness fur hearin' about my adventures on the briny deep."

Captain Bagg shook hands with the boys, and said, "And I suppose they would like to hear a story from me?"

"Yes!" cried both boys.

"Well," said the captain, "it was this way. This old sailor was my first mate on the brig *Ellen Mudge*——"

"*Mush*, I allus called her," said the old sailor.

"And," continued the captain, "we were bound from New York to Mozambique. We had a beautiful run of it down to the Cape of Good Hope. I daresay I counted my chickens before they were hatched, for we had not fairly begun to make northing before it piped up from the south-south-east, and the weather speedily grew worse and worse till it was blowing a real gale. I hove her to on the starboard tack, and soon the wind hauled more to the eastward and blew harder than ever. Two days and nights we were hove to, and neither I nor your old friend there had any rest. On the afternoon of the third day a hand forward sung out, 'Land, ho!' There it was, sure enough, dead under our lee, and a raging, howling sea breaking on the rocks. To make a long story short, at five o'clock I let go both bowers in seventeen fathoms. We dragged, and I ordered the masts to be cut away. We stopped dragging, but in a short time our terrible pitching snapped one cable, and the other could not hold her; so in we went, crashing broadside on against the rocks.

"I will not pain you by telling you how my men were swept overboard. All I need to say is that your old friend and I were carried off the poop deck by a monster sea, and that was all I knew till I found myself clinging to a huge rock. I climbed up and reached a sheltered niche in the side of the cliff, where I remained all night." In the morning I searched for my men, but found not a trace of any one save our old friend here, who had also reached a high part of the rocks. Our comrades were all drowned, and the brig was broken in three pieces. So we climbed to the top of the cliff, and saw a fine level piece of country running back from the sea. Behind a clump of trees about a mile away rose some smoke."

"An' I says to you, says I," exclaimed the old sailor, "there are a camp o' savages, an' we'll probably be fried, broiled, or fricassed fur breakfast."

"You did," continued Captain Bagg; "and I answered

that I was too hungry to care much who ate so long as there was some eating going on. Well, we crept through the high grass till we were near enough to see through the bushes. And what do you think we saw?"

"Twenty fierce cannibals in war-paint grouped around a fire eating their horrid meal!" exclaimed Henry.

"Not at all," said the captain, smiling. "We saw a very neat garden, full of rose bushes, surrounding a very pretty white house. It looked for all the world like a modest country residence in England. While we were wondering what sort of people could live in such a house away out in the wilds of east Africa, a man appeared in the garden. He had on a straw hat and a white flannel suit, and was smoking a cigarette. His hat was pulled down so low in front that we could not see his face, but his dress and his manner assured us that he was an Englishman. So we stepped out and advanced boldly. I said, 'Good-morning, sir,' and he looked up. And what do you suppose?"

"What?" exclaimed the boys.

"He was a genuine African, as black as the coal in your father's cellar. He took the cigarette out of his mouth, put a single eyeglass in his left eye, and after blowing a cloud of smoke, said, 'When did you come up?' 'Up where?' I asked. 'Up the river, of course.' 'What river?' said I. 'Why, the Nile,' said he. 'You all come up the Nile, don't you?' 'I did not come up the Nile,' I replied. 'I came from the sea.' 'Really,' he said; 'but it doesn't make a bit of difference; here you are. But I really don't see that you can do anything. It's all been done to death, ye know, my dear boy, quite too dreadfully done to death, really.' 'What do you mean?' I asked him. 'Can it be possible that you don't know where you are?' 'Not exactly,' I said. 'I'm somewhere on the west coast of Africa, but I lost my reckoning before I arrived.' 'Then,' he replied, 'permit me to enlighten you. You are in darkest Africa, and I am King Ubinam, of whom you have doubtless read accounts by several explorers. I really can't see why you have come to

go over the old ground again. It's all been written up by Stanley and those other fellows, though I regret to say that their accounts are very faulty. I am preparing a volume for publication myself. It is to be given out first in the form of letters, which will be printed simultaneously in England and America, and afterwards collected in book form. Each letter will contain six illustrations, reproduced from kodak photographs taken by myself, and signed with a fac-simile of my autograph. I get one pound extra per letter for the use of the autograph. So you see, my dear fellow, you are quite out of it, and you'd better go back, 'pon my honour.' 'But,' I said, 'we are no explorers. We are shipwrecked mariners. Seeing the smoke from your chimney, we thought there might be a camp of savages, or even cannibals, and we might get a bite to eat.' The king laughed. 'Savages! cannibals!' he said. 'Why, my dear fellow, you're quite behind the times. We don't have those things any more. We've been explored, and we've learnt the habits of our European discoverers. But come into the palace and breakfast with me, and you shall meet my daughters. They'll give you a royal welcome when they learn that you are not an explorer. We so seldom see any one here except explorers, for it *is* a little off the lines of travel.'"

Here the old sailor, slapping his hand on his knee, broke in. "Waal, boys, you never seed no sich gals as them there two wot I'm a-tellin' you of. One on 'em war about six feet high, an' had sich ears an' han's an' feet as I never seed off a monkey. T'other one war short an' fat an' yaller, like thin maple syrup. The tall one war called Gladys, an' the short one Gwendoline. An' their mammar war both short an' thin, an' war called her majesty, but her real name war Maria. For dinner they had some roast beef—roast beef of old England war wot the king called it. I think it war roasted in a tin wash-boiler full o' water; leastways that war how it tasted. But beggin' your pardon, Cap'n; this 'ere's your yarn, so heave ahead."

"The king said to me," continued the captain, "'We

always have our beef cooked this way. You see, the truth of the matter is, dear boy, that we've quite fallen into English habits.' And then Gwendoline turned to our old friend here and said, 'Awfully jolly, don't you think?' And he said he hadn't met with anything so jolly since he'd been half tickled to death by a porcupine which had crawled into his bunk on the coast of Morocco. I tried to warn him not to talk that way, and I heard Gwendoline whisper to him: 'You're chaffing us; you know you are. But we are up to chaff, really. But, for goodness' sake, be careful that you don't irritate papa. When he's aroused, he's very terrible, 'pon honah!'"

"Waal, I tried to be decent to him," broke in the old sailor, "'cos he war a king, and wore a white flannel suit; but, by the great horn spoon, the plum-pudding' war too bloomin' much fur me. So I says to him: 'Kingsy, if any explorer told you that this 'ere war plum-pudding', he war a-givin' you a bilin' twister. It's duff, that's wot it are—duff, an' blame poor duff, too.' Waal, that poor king he looked down into his plate, an' he hove a sigh like a grampus, an' then he looks at me from under his eyebrows most sorrowful-like, and says he: 'Deary me! Deary me!' But beggin' your pardon, Cap'n, perceed."

"Her majesty," continued the captain, "put her napkin up to her eyes and burst into tears. 'If you talk that way, Ubinam,' she sobbed, 'I'll never get into society, never!' And the girls both looked very sad. So our old friend said, 'It ain't so werry bad, an' I'll take a little more.' And then the king looked more melancholy than ever, and rose from the table, saying, 'I hate a man who tells the truth and then tries to fib out of it.' With that he lit a cigarette, and went out into the garden. The two girls took us into the library, and explained to us that the queen had to do her own cooking, because they couldn't hire servants in that part of the world, and they feared that she would worry herself into a decline if she didn't soon conquer the mysteries of those British dishes, because his majesty would tolerate nothing that was not

English. 'But,' I said, 'if she keeps on this way, the king will die of dyspepsia.' Gladys looked at Gwendoline, and said, 'Maybe that is what is troubling papa now. Oh, if we could only get him to eat men again as he used to do in the good old days before the explorers came and made us so very English!' And both the girls looked at us so very earnestly that I said, with much emphasis, 'Oh, I'd wait awhile if I were you, and give your mother a fair chance. She hasn't got the hang of it yet.' 'No,' said Gladys; 'that's it; and she *does* cook a man so beautifully!'

"Well, boys, we did not sleep very soundly that night, for we were afraid they might take a sudden notion to have us for breakfast. But we hadn't counted on the firmness with which the English ideas had hold of the king. We forced some of the dreadfully cooked food down our throats the next day, but it was hard. The king watched us all the time. We ate less and less as the days went by, and the king grew more and more solemn, and didn't eat much himself. Things went on this way, and we found no opportunity to escape, till one day, about three weeks after our wreck, the king sprang up from the dinner-table, having eaten nothing, and cried out, 'Fijont, sitilisnot, feeb dna egabbac!' Her majesty turned a little pale, looked frightened, but sprang up and cried out, 'Ti fo kniht tnod!' The king said, 'Lliw I!' And the two girls clapped their hands in delight and screamed, 'Ap rof sreehc eerht!' We were alarmed, for we did not know what it all meant. The next thing we knew all four of them dashed out of the dining-room and ran upstairs. Our old friend here said, 'Cap, I reckon we'd better stand by to slip cables.' He was right. We went out into the garden, and had hardly done so when we heard yells, and out came the whole family on the run, the king leading. He had taken off his English clothing. He wore a string of feathers around his waist, a ring in his nose, and a silk hat on the back of his head. In his hand he carried a huge knife. The girls and the queen, also in savage dress, followed, the queen bringing up the rear with a big iron kettle on her arm. We did not stop."

"We cut cables an' set stuns'l's," said the old sailor. "We got under way all standin', as ye mought say, an' steered fur the open sea. We grabbed up our life-presarvers from the place we'd hid 'em, put 'em on as we run, an' jumped into the sea. We struck out for the offin', fur we didn't know but that there Anglified old cannibal might sprout a canoe as quick as he had a knife. But it seems he didn't have one. We swum out, an' out, an' out, till we got tired, an' then we floated. You know we didn't get drowneded—'cos w'y? we're here. Wich the same it are, 'cos we was picked up the next mornin' by a steam-yacht wot was makin' a v'yage round the world, an' we worked our way home in her. But, beggin' your pardon, Cap'n, this here are your yarn."

"Well," said the captain, "anyhow, you've finished it."

A CONVENIENT WHALE.

ONE OF THE OLD SAILOR'S YARNS.

BY W. J. HENDERSON.

ONE very clear and calm day, when the sun was bright and the sea was smooth as oil, the boys became tired of play, and decided to go and talk to the old sailor, or, rather, let him talk to them. So they walked down to the pier, and there, as usual, sat their friend gazing out to sea. The boys often wondered what it was that the old sailor was looking for out there, but as he never told them they never found out. Away out on the horizon were two three-masted schooners with every stitch of canvas spread to catch the faint upper current of air that hardly gave them steerageway. Off to the southward a little squat, lead-coloured fruit-steamer, with a gaudy, red-topped funnel, was rolling lazily along on the last stretch of her voyage from Havana, her lumbering sway resembling for all the world the motion of a duck walking. Off in the north-east four short masts and two columns of smoke rose far enough above the blue rim of the sea to let the spectator know that an ocean greyhound was slipping along. Half-way between these and the two schooners, but much nearer to the land, was a curious old-fashioned brig, with a very high poop, a top-gallant fore-castle, single topsails, and a bowsprit that stood up in front of her almost like a mast. The old sailor turned his head slightly when he heard the footsteps of the boys behind him.

"There she blows!" said the old sailor.

"Who?" asked Henry.

"You, in course," replied their friend. "That's wot we says aboard o' a whalin'-wessel when we sees a whale."

"Were you ever a sailor on a whaling-ship?"

"S'posin' I wos to ax you wot kind o' a wessel were that," said the old sailor, pointing at the old-fashioned brig, "wot'd you go fur to say?"

"A brig!" exclaimed both boys.

"W'y?"

"Because she has two masts, both square-rigged."

"Werry good, too, says I. An' s'posin' I wos to ax you wot kind o' trade she were in, wot'd you say?"

"I don't know," said Henry.

"That's werry good, too. W'en you don't know nothin', say so an' stick to it. Mebbe you might learn."

'Then the old sailor stared out at the sea and laughed a long silent laugh. "Now I'm a-goin' fur to tell you a secret," he continued presently. "I don't know neither."

He laughed again, and the boys laughed too.

"But," said the old sailor, "she looks like a old whalin'-brig called the *Merry Grampus* wot I were oncet first mate on, which the same time I went into some werry high latitudes, an' come putty near not comin' back never no more."

"Oh, tell us about that!" exclaimed both boys, knowing that their quaint friend had another yarn ready for them.

"This 'ere yarn wot I'm a-goin' fur to tell you," began the old sailor, watching the brig and shaking his head gravely, "are a werry curious yarn, an' it all happened in the summer o' 1848. The brig *Merry Grampus* were commanded by Cap'n Jehosaphat Snodgrass, a werry tall, thin man wot did most o' his talkin' through his nose, though I didn't see no need o' that, 'cos his mouth were as big as a moorin' pipe, an' his ears wos too. Howsumever, that 'ain't got nothin' to do with the yarn wot I'm agoin' fur to tell you. Cap'n Jehosaphat Snodgrass were mortal fond o' carryin' sail, an' he never were so happy as when he had all his stuns'ls on. So it were not so werry many days before we wos at the entrance to Davis's Straits, which is the front door o' the north pole. We

had been doin' putty well, an' had some considerable number o' barréls o' oil stowed away below; but now luck fell dead agin us, an' it seemed as ef every whale had gone South to spend the summer in warm latitudes, which wos contrary to nature.

"To make things wuss an' wuss, it came on to blow from the north'ard an' west'ard, an' Cap'n Jehosaphat Snodgrass he ups an' he says, says he, 'I'll be blowed ef I'm a-goin' to butt agin a gale like a bloomin' Flyin' Dutchman,' says he just like that to me, as wos first mate. 'Werry well, sir,' says I; 'ef you don't heave to, you got to scud,' says I to him, says I. 'Then let her scud,' says he to me, says he, just like that. So I got the old hooker under a close-reefed main-tops'l an' double-reefed fores'l, an' I let her go south-s'uth-east. We ran that way fur about ten hours, an' then the sea begin to git too high fur us to run any more; so the cap'n he says, says he, that we'd have to heave to, arter all, an' wuss luck to it! So we hove her to on the port tack. But, bless you! we hadn't much more'n got it done, when, bizz! the wind smacks around to the sou'west an' blows the sea out flatter'n a New England slapjack. Then Cap'n Jehosaphat Snodgrass says he to me, says he, 'We got to heave her to this new wind on the starboard tack, 'cos ef we go on the port tack we'll fetch up on Cape Farewell, which the same it are a werry improper place fur to fetch up on, me knowin', 'cause I bin there.' An' says I to him, says I, 'Werry well, sir; I don't want to fetch up on Cape Farewell, nor no other cape, 'cos dry land ain't no place fur the keel o' a ship.' So we heaves her to on the starboard tack, an' there we stayed fur three days an' nights. All the time we wos makin' about seven p'int's leeway, an' w'en the gale broke the cap'n he figured it out that we wos not fur to the south'ard an' east'ard o' Cape Discord, which, as you werry well knows, is on the east coast."

"East coast of what?" asked Henry.

"East coast o' Greenland, o' course," answered the old sailor. "You didn't suppose that w'en we wos in Davis's Straits we wos off the Cape o' Good Hope, did you?"

The boys looked abashed, and the old sailor, after indulging in one of his silent laughs, proceeded thus :

"Waal, arter the gale ended, the lookout was stationed in the crow's-nest agin, an' we hoped we might see a whale putty soon. We hadn't much faith, howsumever, 'cos we'd never done no whalin' on that side o' Greenland, an' didn't know much about it; neither did nobody else, so fur as I know. Howsumever, it weren't so werry long before, while we was a-standin' to the sou'west under heavy canvas, the lookout sings out, 'There she blows, an' there she breaches!'

" 'Were away? " says I to him, says I.

" 'Two p'int's off the lee bow ! ' says he to me, says he.

"Waal, Cap'n Jehosaphat Snodgrass he comes on deck in about two jumps, an' orders me to take the second boat, an' he was goin' to take the fust himself. We lowered away, an' was just a-startin' from the ship's side, w'en the lookout sings out agin, an' we learned that there was another whale up an' blowin' about half a mile away from the fust. The cap'n started with his boat arter this new one, an' I went arter the one wot 'd bin sighted fust. Waal, I sees when we begin to bear down on him that he were a werry big an' powerful-lookin' bull whale, an' I got ready to have a lively scrimmage. I handled the harpoon myself, an' I sent it in, as I thought, putty deep. The whale up flukes an' sounds, an' the line run out o' the tub like lightnin' fur a minute or two, I tell you. He didn't go werry deep, though, an' soon he came up, shootin' half his length out o' the water. Then he started off fur the north pole as hard as he could tear. Gee-whizz ! The way we went through the water fur a minute or two ! Then I looked down at the line, an' I was scared to see that it were frayed, an' ready to break. I grabbed it outside the boat's gunnel. Jest then the whale gives a jump, bang went the line, an' I were overboard an' goin' through the water like an express train."

The boys almost held their breath in anxiety.

"W'en I come to the surface," continued the old sailor, "I were a hundred an' fifty yards from the boat, still hangin'

on to the line, an' bein' towed through the sea about twelve knots an hour. I were such a poor swimmer I knowed I couldn't git back to the boat, an' I knowed no boat could catch me a-goin' at that gait. I made up my mind my time had come, but I says to myself, says I, 'I won't go under till I've got to.' So I turned over on my back an' hung on. As long as the whale kept a-goin' I couldn't sink. He kept on fur I don't know how long—two or three hours—an' I were putty near dead. 'The brig an' boats wos out o' sight long ago. Then all on a sudden the whale he stopped an' turned back, comin' right at me. Then I gave up an' let go the line. Of course I went down, an' when I came up I came up right alongside o' the whale, wot were lyin' puffickly still. 'Dead,' I thought, believin' I'd sent the harpoon in fur enough to bleed him to death. But I were sinkin' agin.* I grabbed out with both hands, an' by good luck caught the harpoon line. I hauled myself up to the surface an' got my breath. 'Ef the whale's dead,' says I to myself, says I, 'he'll float.' So by means o' the line I climbs up on his back. Waal, I weren't so werry much better off than I were before, 'cos floatin' around on a dead whale in the North Atlantic ain't such sport as it might seem to them wot hasn't tried it.

"Waal, I puzzled my brains as to wot I were to do next. Generally speaking, I knowed the land were somewhere to the west'ard of me, an' it couldn't be so werry fur away neither, owin' to the distance the whale had towed me toward it. How were I to get there? The wind were now a fair breeze from the east'ard, an' I says to myself, says I, 'Ef I could only rig a sail on this 'ere whale, an' steer him somehow, mebbe I could sail myself ashore.' Waal, there were the harpoon an' the line—one spar an' plenty o' riggin'. But if I used the harpoon fur a mast it weren't tall enough, an' I wouldn't have no yard. So I were putty much puzzled. But byme-by I jumps up with a new idee. 'Wot's the reason I can't make a mast out o' myself?' says I to myself, says I, just like that. So I takes off my shirt, an' with my knife an'

yarns from the harpoon line I soon had a werry good sail made. Then I had an awful time a-pullin' the harpoon out o' the whale. Out she came, though, an' not a speck o' blood followed, w'ich struck me all in a heap, till I remembered that he wouldn't bleed arter he were dead. I bent my sail on to the harpoon, an' then I made a parral 'round my neck, by means o' which I slung my yard. I made the sheets fast to my feet, an' I were ready to get under way."

"But how did you steer?" said Henry.

"W'y, I jest rigged lines on to his tail, an' w'en I wanted to steer, pulled his tail fur a rudder.

"Waal, I carc'lated I were makin' about two knots an hour," continued the old sailor, "an' I were considerable worried about the wind holdin', or whether I'd git ashore afore I starved to death. Howsumever, to make the story short, I sailed all night, and as soon as daylight come I sees land dead ahead, about four miles away. Now I wished I knowed how much water that whale drawed, so's I could tell what kind o' a harbour to make fur. I looked mighty close at the land which I were approachin', but I couldn't see no inlet. But putty soon I did see somethin' wot pleased me a heap more, an' that were an Esquimau a-coming off in his dak. He'd seed me a-comin', an' wos bound to find out wot kind o' a craft I were. He pulled up about fifty yards away, an' axed me wot I were. I told him as quick as I could, an' says to him, says I, to please take me off.

"Waal, young gen'lem'n, before he could make a stroke, I felt a sudden earthquake under me. The whale give a great big shiver, humped his back, threw up his flukes, sent me a-flyin' into the air, an' disappeared. Luckily fur me, I'd already taken off my harpoon yard, so arter sinkin' putty deep, I came up agin, an' the Esquimau, who had made a good guess, were right there and grabbed me. He pulled me into his boat, where I sat puffickly dumb fur a few minutes. W'en I looked up, the Esquimau were a-laffin' at me. 'Putty good joke, I s'pose,' says I; 'but I don't see it.' 'Why,' says he, 'you ort to be satisfied. That whale saved your

life.' 'Says to him, says I, 'That's all werry well, but that whale were dead, an' hadn't no business to come to life agin like that.'

"'Dead? Nonsense!' says the Esquimau, paddlin' me toward the land. 'He were asleep.'

"'Asleep?' says I; 'with a harpoon in him?'

"'Yes,' says he to me, says he, laffin still more; 'you hit him on the funny-bone with it w'en you struck him, an' jest put him to sleep arter the first shock were over. It always does. We Esquimaux often harpoon whales on the funny-bone just fur the fun o' the thing.'"

The old sailor looked gravely around the horizon for a moment, and then concluded thus:

"I got home agin all right in the course o' time, or I wouldn't be here; but I 'ain't never believed that that Esquimau told the truth."

"AFTER YOU, SIR."

BY COULSON KERNAHAN.

AS Mr. Alexander Johnston was in the habit of assuming a ferocious scowl, which he fancied gave him the air of a man who wasn't to be trifled with, and had a habit of twirling up a pair of fierce moustaches into a furious curl, he was regarded by nervous folk and the local tradesmen as a very formidable individual, and one whom it was desirable to conciliate.

It must have been at least half-past six when he stepped out of the 'bus one evening on his way home, and, as it was getting dark, he did not notice, until he had put his hand inside the rails to undo the latch of his gate, that a dog of exceptionally savage appearance was regarding him intently from the doorstep. Johnston must have had a kind heart in spite of his fierce looks, for, on catching sight of this unexpected visitor, his bearing became instantly changed—the scowl was replaced by an expression which seemed to bespeak a desire to live on terms of peace and amity with all creation, and even the ends of his moustache drooped to an attitude of conciliatory benevolence.

"Tum along, old fellow, then; tum along," he said in an insinuating and silvery voice, patting his leg, meanwhile, in that seductive way generally supposed to be so irresistible with dogs, and assuming a manner as endearing as that which is adopted to her recently-slapped charge by a nursemaid who hears her mistress coming. The "old fellow" exhibited an unmistakable desire to accept the invitation, and to "tum along," then and there; but Johnston, instead of waiting to

received his guest in order to make him feel at home, as one would have supposed would be the case, placed himself with singular haste, and more singular inconsistency, upon the other side of the road, remarking, "Well, I'm bothered," as he did so. Just at that moment, and to his inexpressible relief, he saw, swaggering down the road, in all the glory of martial array, his friend and lodger, Sergeant Brown, of the Tower Hamlets Rifles. I can't tell you what Johnston's thoughts were, as he didn't express them audibly, and I wish to confine myself strictly to facts, but I imagine them to have been as follows:—

"By Jove! here's Brown—that's luck, anyway! I guess I'll let him be the first to make the acquaintance of the gentleman on the doorstep;" but, whether I am right or wrong in my inference, it is a fact that Johnston turned sharply on his heel and disappeared with rapidity round the nearest corner.

"Brown 'll make the beast sit up," he said, as he went along. "How many Bengals did he say he'd shot when he had to go out, on business for the firm, to India? I forget now; but I know he told the wife and me that the natives used to call him 'Bungah Woolah,' which he said was Hindoo for tiger-slayer. Yes, and Mrs. J. up and asked him if he'd any skins left! Artful old girl, Mrs. J.! She'd an eye to a rug for the front drawing-room, I'll bet. But she looked blue when he said he'd given 'em all away to native princes, and hadn't a rug of 'em left. But what the dickens did she go and tell Brown about that burglar affair of mine for? Let me see, how did it come about? Oh! I remember. She called Brown a 'bloodthirsty wretch,' and added after that I was every bit as bad. 'Yes, Johnston's every bit as bad; Mr. Brown,' she said. 'That evening when the burglars got in, it was all I could do to prevent him going down to let the villains murder him in cold blood. "Martha," he said when he woke me, "there's a burglar in the house. I can hear him distinctly. There's more than one, I expect—half a dozen, as likely as not—and I'm going down to 'em, Martha.

In case I should get killed, or any of 'em should come up, you'd better get under the bed!" And he'd have gone down to 'em, Mr. Brown! Yes, father of a family as he is, he'd have gone down to 'em if I'd let him; and the more I wanted him to stop the more he wanted to go! I shall never forget his noble words that night: "It's hard for me to control myself, Martha," he said, "but for your sake and the children's, and as you don't like being left, I *won't* go; but I'll put my head out of the window, and call 'fire!' instead."

"Yes, that's what I did say, right enough, but I didn't want her to go and tell Brown so. He wouldn't understand how a father of a family feels, and I know the brute was grinning to himself behind the paper all the time."

While Johnston was thus soliloquising, he had passed through various side streets to where the 'bus had first put him down, and he now found himself turning the corner of his own road again.

"Why, here's Brown!" he said, as he tried to put on the look of just having returned from the City. "Hullo, Brown! where are you off to?"

"Only to get some tobacco," was the reply. "If you're going in, just ask the wife to put my slippers by the fire to warm."

Johnston nodded, and passed on. "Ah! he doesn't suspect that this is my *second* appearance in the street to-night," he chuckled. "Plucky fellow, Brown! Didn't seem a bit upset by his encounter with that beast of a dog. Hope he walloped the brute well to prevent him coming back!" he added uneasily, as he lifted the latch of the gate. "I don't want—but, hullo! Why, the beast *is* there again, and he doesn't look in a good temper, either. I must take another turn till Brown gets that tobacco, and then I'll slip in behind him. He'll have to clear the course for the second time this evening."

The turn was taken, and Johnston was soon at the door again, only to find the dog still in possession, and looking, if anything, more bloodthirsty than before.

"Well, this won't do," he said; "he's let Brown in, and I don't see why he shouldn't let me. I've tried the conciliatory dodge, and it didn't work. Now I'll try the other game. There's nothing like showing a bold front to animals; so here goes. Get out, you brute! Boo! Whist! Scat!"

Johnston's idea of a "bold front" appears to have been a rather original one, for the only portion of his person which was visible the next half-second was the extreme end of a pair of coat-tails, travelling round the corner at the rate of three miles to the minute. "I made sure the beast had gone clean, stark, staring mad!" he said, when he halted to mop his streaming brow. "Brown must have irritated him terribly to make him look like that. It would be suicide to go near him again. I must wait till Brown takes his evening stroll and pop in unnoticed behind him. Why, there is Brown!—just come out, evidently. He mustn't see me, or he might suspect something, and would grin more than he did about that burglar business—confound him!"

Half an hour was spent in dogging the footsteps of the unsuspecting Brown, and then Johnston began to get irritable.

"What's the fellow hanging about the streets for on such a beastly evening?" he growled. "Wonder if he's going to meet anybody? I'll go over and speak to him."

"Ah, Brown! out for a stroll? Nice evening, ain't it?"

"It's a splendid evening," replied his friend. "I feel like stopping out all night, I'm enjoying it so."

"Stop out all night, hey?" muttered Johnston to himself blankly. "I hope you won't though, for I think it's a dismal, damp, diabolical evening!"

"But, by the bye," put in Brown, "what are *you* doing out so late?"

"I've just been round to see Potter's new chicken-house," answered Johnston unblushingly. "Shall you be much longer?"

"No, I shall turn in when I've finished my pipe," responded Brown, walking on; "don't wait for me."

"I'll just take a smart walk to the end of the grove and

back, to put the blood in motion and give Brown time to clear the field again," soliloquised Johnston; "and then hurrah for a warm supper and a corner by the fire!"

The walk was taken, and Johnston was beginning to feel quite cheerful at the prospect of a speedy issue out of all his troubles, when, on turning to retrace his steps, whom should he run into but Brown, who told him that he was on his way home, and proposed that they should go together. To this Johnston readily assented, but just as they reached the gate he suddenly stopped.

"Hang it! my boot-lace is down—follow you in a moment, old man; don't wait," he called out, adding to himself with a chuckle, "Johnston, my boy, you're a deep 'un, you are—a regular Bismarck, by Jove!—only I hope that brute of a dog won't come *this* way when Brown drives him out!"

"Ah! that reminds me," said Brown, stopping; "I must step back to tell the stationer to send me the *Standard* instead of the *Telegraph*."

"I'll come too," said Johnston promptly; "I want to make a small purchase."

Johnston made his small purchase, and Brown mentioned about the papers, and they started on the return journey.

"Do you know if there are any letters for me?" inquired the former.

"Don't know," replied Brown; "I haven't been in yet."

"Not been in!" exclaimed his friend, in amazement. "Not been in! Why?"

"Well," said Brown, looking very red and sheepish, "I don't know whether I ever told you about it, but I was bitten by a dog when I was a child, and—most unaccountable thing, an early fright—one never quite gets over it—I've always been a bit shy of dogs ever since; and there's an infernal great brute on your doorstep, who seems to have taken rather a dislike to me; and I thought, if you didn't mind, old fellow, I'd wait and let you go in first."

"Well, that's the strangest thing, and most unaccountable coincidence I ever heard in my life," replied Johnston; "but

it happened before I was born, you know—my poor mother was frightened by a dog, and although one is not, of course, accountable for that sort of thing, I've always been nervous of 'em myself. What do you say to fetching a policeman to make the brute on the doorstep move on? A bob apiece will square him, I've no doubt."

Brown thought the idea excellent; and the man in blue readily, but grinningly, assenting, our two friends adjourned rather hastily to the Duke of York while the ejection was being carried out, Brown observing feelingly that he "hated to see poor dumb animals suffer"; a sentiment, Johnston said, which "did him credit."

* * * * *

"What a difference daylight makes in the look of a thing!" said Johnston to himself next morning, as he was pulling on his boots. "Ghost stories always make me feel creepy at night, but I can read 'em by the dozen in the day and never turn a hair. I wasn't up to the mark yesterday, or I shouldn't have made such an ass of myself about that dog. But if ever I see the beast again I'll give him beans; I'll——" He left the sentence unfinished, as though his intention with regard to the dog were too terrible to be put in words; and assuming his customary scowl of a man who wasn't to be trifled with, he opened the door and stepped out. He stepped out, but he stepped in again a great deal quicker, and with a word which I shrink from mentioning.

"If I'd been a minute later it would have been all up!" he gasped; "as it is, I almost pinched the end of his nose! To think of his being there again! Well, that fool of a Brown will be blundering out directly, and I only hope he doesn't see who's waiting for him till he's shut the door! But he mustn't see me hanging about here, or he'll smell a rat."

It wasn't long before Johnston, peering over the banisters, saw his unsuspecting friend buttoning up his greatcoat to the accompaniment of "Let me like a soldier Fall!" Brown gave his moustaches another twirl, lingered another moment

to finish up the song in a final burst, took his umbrella from the stand, and stepped out.

There was a short, sharp growl and a yell of human pain, and then, as Johnston walked down the stairs, the door went to with a bang that shook the street, and Brown rushed into his arms, trembling visibly.

"Johnston!" he gasped, "Johnston—he's there again—that brute—waiting for us—and—and—fiercer than ever!"

There was a sickly attempt at a smile on Johnston's face as he pretended to be entirely taken aback by the intelligence; but when three quarters of an hour had passed with no prospect of deliverance, he began to get desperate.

"It's more than my berth is worth to be late at the office to-day," he said. "Sooner or later one of us must go out, and I propose we toss for it." "I always win, and I think I'm safe," he added inaudibly.

Now if there was a point on which Brown flattered himself that he was lucky it was tossing, and he jumped at the offer with joy. "Sudden death; call to my pieces!" he shouted, trembling with excitement.

"Tails!" yelled Johnston madly.

"Heads it is; I'm very sorry, but you've got to go, old man," said Brown with a look which, notwithstanding his expression of regret, would not have struck an unprejudiced onlooker as indicative of deep disappointment. "I'll get you my life-preserver; it's behind my bedroom door. Hit him straight between the eyes when he flies at you, and as hard as you can, for heaven's sake!"—"and mine"—he added, as he rushed upstairs for the weapon.

As he entered the room again the maidservant came flying into his arms in a most excited state. "Oh, Mr. Johnston, sir! and Mr. Brown!" she said, "there's a great dog on the doorstep as is the most savidge beast I ever see, and won't go away nohow, though I put the chain on the door and 'ave been a-pokin' of 'im up with the broom-'andle till 'e's that wiolent as I think 'e'll 'ave the door down, and is a-roarin' like the wild beasts at the Zoo!"

HAVE you ever seen any one very ill with sea-sickness? Well, it isn't a cheerful sight, is it? but it is a sight which would be comparatively exhilarating compared to Johnston's face at this last piece of intelligence. "I shall be torn to pieces! eaten alive!" he gasped, sitting down in despair upon the coal-scuttle, and rocking backward and forward as if in internal pain, and with a look upon his face that would have touched a heart of stone.

Reader, this has been a frivolous and unprofitable narrative; a narrative in which the weakness of two fellow-creatures has been made a butt for laughter, ridicule, and scorn. Ours is no romance of tournament and chivalry; we deal with the prosaic days of the penny 'bus and the box hat; and our tale is not of minstrel and knight-errant, but of commonplace and ordinary men. Let us ever remember, however, that it is among commonplace mortals that nature finds the material for the making of her grandest heroes; and let us not suppose that nervousness and timidity are incompatible with what is chivalrous and brave. Many a deed of valour has been wrought by hands palsied with nervousness; many a feeble woman has achieved that which required courage and determination greater than are necessary to gain a Victoria Cross! And this man Brown, at whom we have been sneering for his timidity, showed that, with all his human weakness, he, too, was of the nature of heroes.

"Johnston," he said, clasping his friend by the hand, "I cannot let you go. I have none to mourn me. You have a wife and child. Johnston, I go to face that furious brute! Good-bye, old fellow, good-bye!"

Reader, can you blame Johnston that he wept as he clasped the hand of his deliverer? Yes, strong man as he was, he wept. "For the sake of my wife and child, I accept your noble offer," he said; and then, after he had taken one long last look into the resolute eyes that met his in a silent farewell, the unhappy Johnston flung himself upon the sofa, and buried his head deep in the cushions that he might not hear the cries of his devoted friend.

And then, with face set and stern, and with the life-preserver clasped firmly in his hand, Brown walked towards the door, and stepped out to his fate.

THE DOG WAS GONE—and *Brown knew it when he made his noble offer.*

But don't say a word to Johnston on any account, for to this day he regards Brown with a veneration amounting to worship.

LETTING PUSSY OUT.

BY EZRA BEN EZRA.

WHEN I got into bed after reading "Twenty True Real Ghost Stories" my feet were very cold and my head was correspondingly hot, and sparks flashed before my eyes with nervousness. I turned and tossed and could not sleep. The clock struck twelve, and I was wondering whether it would ever stop striking when I heard the cat in the hall below mewing to get out of doors.

I ought not to have been any more afraid of ghosts out of bed than in ; yet though I am not counted a timid man, I did feel averse to going down the dark stairway into the gloomy hall to let Maria out. None of the ghosts with whom I had spent the evening had poked long, bony hands through the balusters to seize the ankles of those continually going up or down stairs ; but I hugged the wall as I went down, and had an uncomfortable creepy feeling when I saw Maria's shining green eyes reflecting a faint gleam of light from the top of the stairway.

I think I said some very unpleasant things to the cat as I opened the vestibule door for her. Had I been less annoyed with her, probably I should have remembered before allowing the inner door to slam behind me that I had no pockets in my night-shirt, and consequently no latch-key.

As I opened the street door the hall door banged to, and there I was—shut out.

Shut out ! In my night-shirt, with not even slippers on my feet, I was in the front vestibule of a house right on a principal street in a city, and no one in the house to let me in again !

No ghost's work was this. I could only blame the cat, the wind, myself, and more particularly my wife and daughter for having gone off visiting and left me to such a misadventure.

After wrestling vainly awhile with the heavy lock of the heavy hall door, I lost hope of re-entry and opened the street door. Anxiously I peeped up and down in hope of seeing a policeman, of whom I might possibly have got help; but no policeman was in view. As two useless citizens went by I hastily drew in my head, feeling that the disclosure of my appearance and situation at such an hour might prejudice my position as a minister of the gospel.

I thought of the back door; but how was I to get around to the back door? My house was about the middle of a solid front of brick houses, with no rear entrance except through a high gate at the very end of the short street.

Between my house-front and the corner were two electric lights. How they shone! I could see them through the side windows of the porch. I think I never quite appreciated the brilliancy of the electric light till then. On this frosty, windy, starlight, moonlight night each of those implacable lamps—

"Like a comet burn'd
That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
In th' arctic sky."

Could I dare to venture into their range?

Presently I dared not stay any longer where I was. I was shivering with cold, and, besides, the garrulous milkman would find me there in the morning. Then what could I do but leave the city within twenty-four hours? The newspapers would get hold of the tale and treat it with inconsiderate levity. Far and wide the item would be copied. Where could I get a pastorate after that? Everywhere within the connection I should be known primarily as "the minister who got up to let the cat out."

I resolv'd to get around to the back yard and hide at the bottom of the basement stair until my wife came home, if I could do no better.

All this time the lamps and stars seemed to shine brighter and brighter. The moon kept flying onward until she got right in front of the row and lit inexorably every inch of the way I was to go and the wall I had to climb.

Moon or no moon, go I must, or run the risk of losing my life by bronchitis. At the moment I resolved to open the vestibule door quick footsteps came along the pavement. They stopped in front of my house. Goodness! Was the man coming in? I shrank back to the furthest corner of the porch as I heard a voice,—

“Poor pussy! poor kitty! Does her want to get into de porch?”

Maria, after an interview with her unwelcome benefactor, had returned to the front steps. The meddler mounted them and pushed the door open. Maria curved in and affectionately writhed about my legs, while the man went down the steps.

I know that man, and if ever I have a chance to give him such a fright as he gave me——

His feet clacked away out of hearing. Then Maria and I sneaked together out of the front door. Perhaps she felt guilty and desirous to apologise to me; at any rate, she purred loudly and rubbed herself against my legs, and got tangled between my feet, and threw me headlong down the steps to the sidewalk.

Just then I heard a policeman whistle, but I did not wait for him to come along. Now I was outside I was afraid he would arrest me before I could explain. I think I must have been in the state that boys call “rattled.” Common sense would not have been compatible with my night garb in the moonlight on the city street. So on I sneaked, away from the direction of the whistle, and Maria continued to cherish my ankles.

After I had passed six houses and reached the end of the row I found the gate locked. Maria easily scratched her way to the top of that seven-foot gate, thanks to what somebody's smart child called the splinters in her feet.